

THE AUSTRIAN
PHILOSOPHY OF VALUES

—

HOWARD O. EATON

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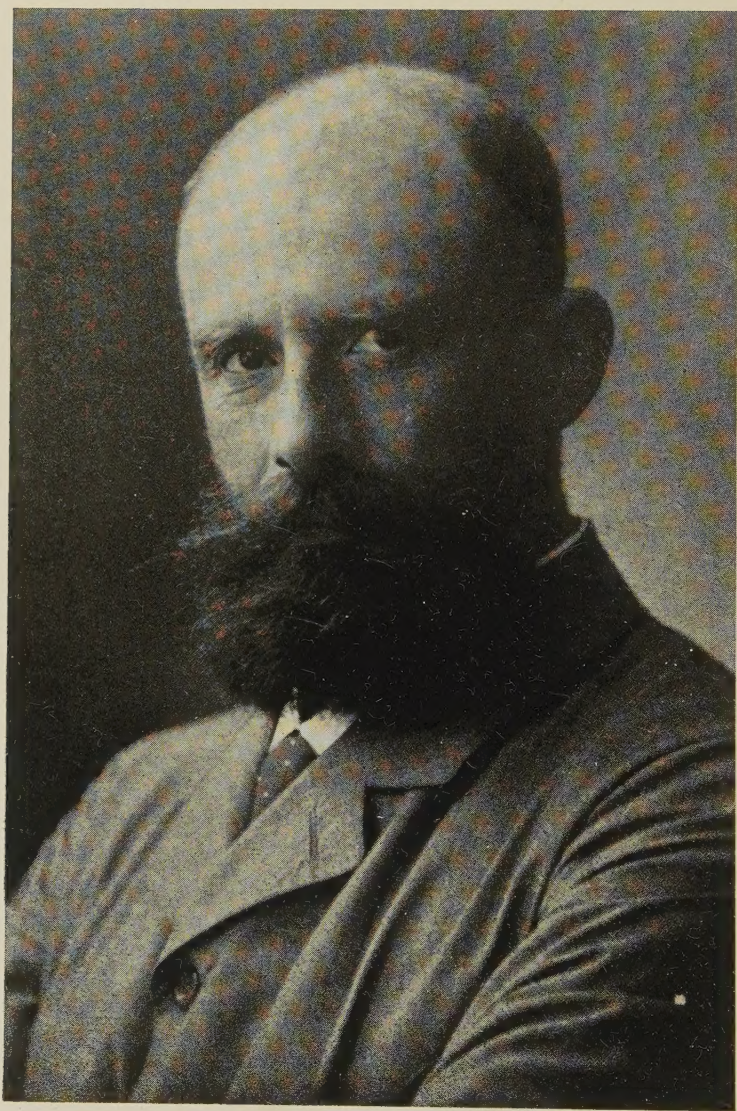
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CHRISTIAN VON EHRENFELS

HOWARD O. EATON, PH.D.

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TO
CHRISTIAN VON EHRENFELS

PREFACE

THE present work is an attempt not at appraisal but at understanding. The reason is not far to seek; appraisal without understanding is bound to be either sentimentality or harsh injustice. On the other hand full understanding will bring appraisal in its train, for one cannot come to know a philosophical movement as vigorous in thought and as fecund in influence as was the school which grouped itself around Franz Brentano in Vienna without ultimately forming a judgment as to its true value. But the judgment of fact must precede the judgment of value, and preferably should be completely divorced from it.

Appraisal will come, but not before we have a wider comprehension of the many contemporary movements in value theory in Europe and America than is possible as yet. There are still too many questions which we must ask. Are all of these schools of thought going in the same direction? or in utterly diverse directions? Are there to be found at least certain definite trends in this world-wide movement? In short, one thing we need badly at present is synoptic work in value theory. This does not mean that we must seek either a syncretic or an eclectic solution to the multifarious problems of value theory. It does mean that we must seek a broad view of the whole problem, but a broad view which is based on intimate and detailed studies of the different separate movements which compose the whole development.

The present work is offered as one step in the achievement of such an ultimately complete conspectus of the whole field of value speculation. There is not a little evidence that the Austrian philosophical theory of value has been misjudged by some, largely no doubt because it has been misunderstood or not adequately presented. If the present work contributes in any measure to lessening this misunderstanding and leads to a wider acquaintance (either through the medium of the present

study or, preferably, at first hand) with the speculations in value theory of Franz Brentano, Alexius von Meinong, and Christian von Ehrenfels, then its chief *raison d'être* will have been fulfilled.

The expression of the author's thanks for the aid and encouragement which he has received from others in the prosecution of these studies cannot repay the debt of gratitude he owes. Especially does he feel his obligations to Professor Ralph Barton Perry, of Harvard, in whose seminar on Values the present problem first seemed of importance to him, and who has kindly read part of the manuscript; and to Professors E. B. McGilvary, M. C. Otto, and F. C. Sharp, of the University of Wisconsin, for the unfailing acumen and kindness with which they offered helpful suggestions throughout the course of these researches. The author must bear the full responsibility for all of the material and method of the book, and for all of its shortcomings.

Professor Christian von Ehrenfels and Professor Oskar Kraus of the German University of Prague, and Professor Ernst Mally, of the University of Gratz, have responded to all inquiries directed to them with unfailing courtesy and interest. The author is indebted to Frau Doris Meinong for a photograph of her husband, to Professor Kraus for a hitherto unpublished photograph of Franz Brentano, and to Professor von Ehrenfels for his own portrait, of which he kindly lent the author the only extant copy, a photograph taken, as he says, not in recent years but in the days of his speculations in value theory.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to President W. B. Bizzell and to the officials of the University of Oklahoma, and particularly to Mr. Joseph Brandt, the Editor of the University of Oklahoma Press, for their generosity and zeal in sparing no pains in the task of publication.

It is a great pleasure for the author that the publication of this book has been planned for this year to honor the seventy years of life and labor of Christian von Ehrenfels.

HOWARD O. EATON

Norman, December 15, 1929.

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THE AUSTRIAN PHILOSOPHY
OF VALUES

CHAPTER ONE

Brentano's Empirical Psychology

BRENTANO'S EMPIRICAL PSYCHOLOGY

THE GESTATION and birth of an entirely new and independent philosophical discipline is sufficiently rare to command our closest attention. The Greeks bequeathed to us logic, ethics, metaphysics, and the beginnings of epistemology; and since then these have constituted the principal fields of philosophic endeavor. At an earlier epoch philosophy embraced an even wider scope than is included in these disciplines, but the process of maturation brought each of the exact sciences one by one to depart from the "mother of sciences" and to become essentially an independent department of human thought. All this has been a continual spoliation, a process of subtraction which has brought it upon *Philosophia* to gaze from her almost deserted mansions over the wide demesnes of intellectual life which no longer claim allegiance to her and which are ruled by others, alien to her modes of thought. It is therefore an event of more than passing interest that the ancient catalog of philosophical disciplines is being expanded, and that the philosopher is turning his attention to entirely new departments of activity.

That to which we have reference is more than merely the appearance of a new school of thought, a new philosophical system or a new personal dogma. Such an event would be of great interest, but it could hardly claim the attention of those not primarily concerned with philosophy as such. But philosophers of many different schools and ways of thinking are beginning to join together in the investigation of a problem which only in recent times is winning recognition as being of co-equal significance with the traditional problems of philosophy. And this activity is arousing interest even beyond the circle of those technically trained in philosophy because it is concerned with

a problem which is of central importance for all of the social sciences, the problem of values. Thus philosophy which was a haughty mother of the exact sciences aspires to become one of the sisterhood of social sciences.

The Problem of Valuation

The concept of values had long been regarded as being rather incidental to metaphysics, or else to economics, ethics, æsthetics or some other of the many social sciences which made use of it. It had been rather taken for granted, and had been, consequently, almost completely neglected as a field of speculative or scientific investigation. The present study is an attempt to analyze in considerable detail the value theories of a small group of men in Austria who did their best to remedy that state of affairs. We designate this group as the Second Austrian School, hinting at their intimate relations with the first Austrian School of economic theory. The founders of this school were Franz Brentano, Alexius von Meinong, and Professor Christian von Ehrenfels, to whom we shall devote the major share of our attention.

This school is of significance because of its attempt to rescue the abstract concept of values as such from its Cinderella-like subordination in the households of the various social sciences and establish it in its rightful place as an independent and co-ordinate department of philosophic thought. Of course it is not possible to study values quite independently of the particular value sciences; a value which is neither economic, ethic, æsthetic, nor any other of the specific types of value seems to be unthinkable. This does not mean that the study of values is open only to economists, or ethicists, or students of æsthetics. It is becoming a matter of pressing concern to discover if there are any respects in which one can generalize concerning values simply *quâ* values, regardless of metaphysical theory or connection with a social science.

The immediate results achieved by this school were in no sense final; indeed one could hardly expect finality in a field so complex and hitherto so little explored as that of the general

theory of value. The work of this group, however, immediately stimulated an enormous amount of thought and criticism elsewhere, and gained recognition for the theory of value as a major subject of philosophical interest. The reader will find an excellent survey of the present status of the theory in Professor R. B. Perry's *General Theory of Value*. What is needed now is a systematic study of the development of these theories, especially as a great deal of the material prerequisite for such a study has become available only recently. If the present study is confined somewhat narrowly within the limits of the work of the founders of the school this must not be thought to imply that the researches of their successors or of men who approach the problem from another viewpoint are of little significance. We must not lose the historical perspective.

Even within the group to which we confine our attention the theory developed only gradually and did not spring Minerva-like from a single brain. Consequently if one insist upon too rigid a statement of it at the beginning it will be found that one has *ipso facto* excluded the speculations of the earlier investigators from consideration. In the later stages of its development the problem takes on the opposite cast, and the loose formulations of the earlier thinkers must be rejected in favor of the more refined distinctions of their successors. In the present study we shall not feel ourselves bound to choose either of these alternatives; to grant that this dilemma is valid would be to overlook the significance of historical development in the formulation of a complex concept. We must apply at each stage of our investigation a canon of selection which is commensurate in strictness and rigor with the stage of development of the problem at the particular historic moment with which we are dealing. This is no new procedure in the history of thought; certainly, even in such an exact science as astronomy, what Aristarchus or Copernicus meant by the revolution of the earth is not the same at all as what a modern astronomer would have in mind. A historical study of the development of a concept is just a continuous series of definitions and reformulations, explicit or implicit.

Our problem is the history of the formulation of a particular concept of values. It had long been a matter of observation that there were certain underlying similarities between the various value judgments as we find them in the different value sciences. They all possessed a certain quantitative character, such that a greater value took precedence in some sense or other over a lesser value. And certain formal relationships had been seen to hold true over wide areas of generalization. Thus economics developed as a collection of such generalizations with regard to "economic worth," and ethics assumed more and more the aspect of a moral calculus.

We must not embark here upon a history of all of the value sciences; it must suffice to note that throughout that history interest has centered chiefly upon the imagined objective character of values, and upon the various attempts to discover the basis for this seeming objectivity. The empirical facts of valuation and of values were at all times so patent that philosophers strove to isolate values as such from the complex mass of phenomena which surrounded them. This was quite in keeping with the regular procedure in the other sciences; thus biological processes were isolated as a unique sort of phenomenon, and similarly various concepts in physics and chemistry (force, atom) came to be separated from the total inchoate mass of the unknown.

But the difficulty in the case of values was that it became increasingly apparent that here one was not engaged in studying phenomena of the external world comparable to the phenomena of the natural sciences. At the most one could offer explanations of value phenomena on the basis of analogies drawn from the other sciences, as for instance when Quesnay, the French Physiocrat, took over the analogy of the circulation of the blood, as discovered by Harvey, and applied it to the circulation of wealth (in his celebrated *Tableau Economique*). This series of attempted generalizations in value theory had gone, in the case of economics for example, from the extreme of Physiocracy, which regarded value as being the strict function of the productive forces of nature (the *produit net*) to the other extreme of

Marxian Socialism, which made use of an essentially physical concept (labor-time) in the measurement of the values "crystallized" in the product. It must be observed that these theories were very excellent explanations of the phenomena so far as observation went; their sole weakness lay in the lack of empirical evidence. Thus the Physiocrats were unable to produce some portion of the total product which was obviously and empirically "net product," and Marx was equally unable to show something in the nature of the manufactured goods which marked them in some way as "crystallization" of labor-time. Although they adopted the terminology and technique of the physical sciences they could not adduce the phenomena which all of the physical sciences were always able to show in verification of their theories. It became evident that the explanation must be sought elsewhere.

The Austrian School of economics introduced an entirely new approach to this problem, in that it confined itself strictly to the problem of the nature of *valuation* itself, as a process, to the complete neglect of the problem as to the nature of the objects of valuation. This freed value speculation at once from the necessity of finding empirical evidence of the unique type of object called "value object," and furthermore it placed the whole problem in its proper light as ancillary to psychology and philosophy rather than to physics and chemistry. Such a revolutionary change was not brought about at a stroke, nor were all of the thinkers instrumental in it equally or fully conscious of its whole significance. One point of agreement was common to all. The new school of value theory always insisted upon looking at values primarily from the viewpoint of the functioning of the valuation process, and it is this which marks their theories as fundamentally different from those of their predecessors. Quesnay, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx had no special psychological operation which they held to be necessary in determining value; the sensory apparatus and the reason were quite sufficient. But the Austrians realized that valuation involved a unique process, over and above the operation of the senses and the reason. They pointed out that one of the unique

characteristics of this process was that it depended in some way or other upon the quantity of the objects of value present in the given situation. But the quantitative law of diminishing utilities is based upon the still more fundamental proposition that values, if studied at all, were to be studied solely as the product of the unique psychological process of valuation.

This new approach to values was a natural product of the times. The collapse of the Hegelian system in the middle of the nineteenth century had one immediate consequence of great importance: the turning of the attention of philosophers to a study of their own minds. As long as it was believed that what is rational, it seemed that the obvious and easy method of studying the human reason (or Reason in general) was to look at it as writ large in the history of the world and the structure of the cosmos. But for a variety of reasons this method of explanation was seen to explain little more than could be shown to have been implicit in it at the commencement of the operation. This change in attitude was due as much to an increase in confidence in the new methods of empirical psychology as to anything else. The Mills, Bain, Lotze, and Wundt, Weber and Fechner, had all been calling attention to psychology not so much as a metaphysical discipline concerned with the old rationalistic problems of the relation of the mind and the body, but as a field of empirical investigation. Comte had been actively preaching the doctrines of Positivism which opened the way for the application of the psychological investigations to the various social sciences, at the heart of which lay the problem of values.

Such profound changes as these in psychology could hardly come to pass without exerting some influence on the investigation of values themselves, and inspiring the hope that where the older "physical" methods of research had failed, the new psychology might have more to offer. As a result, at the opening of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the general problem of values was standing at the cross-roads, and was being subjected to new forces. On the one hand speculation was just abandoning the attempt to find values as being

in any sense objective or objects of the empirical world, and was giving up an out-worn empirical methodology. Yet strangely enough this movement had been inspired by, and took place simultaneously with, the movement in psychology away from the *a priori* analytical psychology of the Hegelians and post-Hegelians toward the more or less objective empirical methodology of the newer schools of psychology. The explanation of these opposed movements is not far to seek, for it was the evident promise of success attending the new methods of psychology which attracted attention to psychology as such, although the economists and students of value theory were not as yet in a position to employ these new methods. This new methodology could not be applied to other fields of investigation before it had been perfected by use in its own field. Furthermore, the economists were far too engrossed in the debates incidental to the preliminary changes of methodology in their own field—notably the debate between Menger and Schmoller as to whether economics was a true science or an art—to be *au courant* with all of the subtle developments in a distant field, even though they were calling upon that other field for help in formulating their own problems. Therefore the psychology which the Austrians imported into economics was at first rather imperfectly conceived, was rather arbitrary and *a priori*, and did violence to all of the technique of a truly empirical science.

The task of harmonizing these apparently conflicting tendencies fell not to the economists themselves, nor even to the ethicists who, in their debates between perfectionists, utilitarians, and intuitionists, were engaged still more earnestly in the discussion of problems of methodology. It could fall only to students of the abstract problems of psychology itself. The first problem to be settled was the problem of psychological methodology itself, before there could be any hope of profitably employing psychology to modify the methodology in the other social sciences. At bottom the question is as to how far the new empirical tendencies might be relied upon and em-

played in psychological and related investigations, and to what extent psychology should still employ the older methods of *a priori* analysis.

Franz Brentano

The man who was both most sensitive to all of these new movements of empirical psychology and also most loyal to and best equipped to understand what was still of value in the older tradition was unquestionably Franz Brentano. It was upon him that devolved not only the broader methodological task, just indicated, of harmonizing the divergent tendencies in psychology, but also the rather more elementary and thankless task of introducing the theories of some of the outstanding psychologists of England and France to his fellow-countrymen. In fact he was early criticized for going to foreign lands for his theoretical inspiration, to the neglect of the traditional German schools, although no one can read him without realizing that he was perfectly familiar, perhaps too familiar, with Kant and the post-Kantians; his sympathies were not at all with the idealists, but rather with the rationalists: Leibnitz, Descartes, and even the schoolmen and Aristotle. In order to understand the tangled threads of his intellectual life, and to see how eminently fitted he was for the task which fell to him, it is necessary to know a little at least of his intensely interesting biography. The world is deeply indebted to the labors of Dr. Oskar Kraus for his enlightening study of the life and philosophical works of Brentano,¹ and not only for the publication of the authoritative biography, but also, with the help of Professor Kastil, for the careful publication of the complete works of Brentano which is now in process.

Franz Brentano was born in 1838 near Boppard, one of the castles of the Rhine. In his infancy the family moved to Aschaffenburg, in Northern Bavaria, where he was reared. He comes from one of the distinguished literary families of Germany (although the name is by origin Italian), being the nephew of Clemens Brentano and Bettina von Arnim, the brother of

¹. Kraus, *Franz Brentano, Zur Kenntnis seines Lebens und seiner Lehre*, 1919.

Lujo (Lucius Joseph) Brentano, for long professor of economics at the University of Munich, and the brother-in-law of Professor Th. Funk-Brentano, of Paris. His intellectual biography begins with a youthful break from religious conviction in favor of "determinism" (in which he followed in the footsteps of his father), and like his father he soon found his way back to the Church, to the great joy of his mother, who was a devout Catholic. His study for the priesthood, during which period he became thoroughly acquainted with Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle, and his consecration in holy orders, in 1864, mark the first phase of his life. Even though a priest-professor he found it impossible to silence all of his uncertainties with regard to the nature of the Trinity, and other points of dogma, and especially from 1867 to 1873, while teaching at the University of Würzburg, he was torn with doubt and unrest. Those were trying years for a Bavarian Catholic in any case—and Brentano was personally acquainted with Döllinger. It was Brentano who was called upon to formulate the principles upon which Bishop Ketteler opposed the dogma of infallibility at the Vatican. Nevertheless the Vatican controversy was essentially irrelevant to his own inner conflicts; it merely furnished the occasion for making these difficulties acute, and the subject of general criticism. Brentano sincerely tried to abide by his vow as a priest to allow no doubts to enter his mind, but he felt that in turning his full powers of investigation to the question of infallibility *before it became a dogma of the Church*, he was not untrue to his vow. His conclusions, after eighteen months of anguished consideration, were inexorably opposed to the doctrine. When, therefore, the Vatican Council accepted it as a dogma, there was little left for him to do.

His inevitable break with the Church, a step which he postponed for some time in order to spare his mother, culminated on Good Friday, 1873. The month previous he had resigned his professorship at the University of Würzburg, as it was clear that he must make his home elsewhere if he would go on with his philosophical work and not devote the rest of his life to theological debate. He could not go with Döllinger

in the establishment of the Old-Catholic Church—with its blessing of God and of Bismarck, as he sarcastically remarked in a letter,² for he, as a Bavarian and a Pan-German, hated Bismarck with an undying hatred, which only grew more bitter with the years of his residence in Austria. Nor could he accept Protestantism, which he dubbed a half-way house of religion. Thus he was completely alone, misunderstood, and hated and mis-represented by Catholic, Old-Catholic and Protestant alike. Through it all he retained a beautiful and simple primitive Christian faith, evidence of which we have in his posthumous work, *Die Lehre Jesu und ihre bleibende Bedeutung*.

It was with the hope, then, of a new life of achievement that he accepted a call to the University of Vienna, where he was at first Professor, and afterwards (through the machinations of his Catholic enemies at the time of his marriage) only Privat-Dozent, until blindness and ill-health forced him to relinquish his teaching duties and to spend his declining years in Italy and Switzerland, where he died in 1917.

Brentano's claim to the notice of posterity rests largely on his *Psychologie from the Empirical Standpoint*³ written in 1874 at the time of, or just after, the religious crisis in his life. It is true, as Kraus points out, that it would be more unfair in the case of Brentano than of most other men to judge him by his published writings, although the efforts of Kraus and Kastil are doing much to correct this deficiency in the record. Nevertheless in his *Psychologie* he laid the basis for his own value theory and for the later epistemological and value theories of his students, especially Meinong and Ehrenfels. Enough of his work has now been published for us to form a fairly accurate view of his value theory, although the same could hardly be said for his theory of knowledge. We shall commence our study of Brentano's system by examining the relevant portions of the *Psychologie* of 1874, taking up his other work as occasion warrants.

². Ibid., p. 120.

³. *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkte*, 1874, 2nd ed., 1924f.

There are many aspects of this work which call for more extended study than we are able to devote to them under the limitations of the present work. For instance, in spite of his recent break with the Church, his religious convictions, rendered if anything more profound by his experiences and meditations, are manifest in his repeated insistence that the immortality of the soul is one of the ultimate and principal problems of psychology. From the viewpoint of value theory Brentano is significant in that he fully realized the part which psychology must play in the development of other sciences, particularly the social sciences. As he says, the roots of æsthetics and logic are to be found in psychology, as well as of pedagogy, the "pedagogy of society" as well as of the individual. Both ethics and politics should be based upon it. Again, social life is badly disorganized, and calls for readjustment, a readjustment which political economy has undertaken but which it cannot complete, because the chief task rests with psychology, as John Stuart Mill recognized in the Introduction to his *Principles of Political Economy*. Brentano even forecasts very clearly the character and value of mental tests.

It is not, however, in these details that Brentano's influence upon value speculation was at its maximum. His important influence may be regarded from three viewpoints: (1) his general psychological methodology and theory of psychology, as laying the basis for a psychological theory of value; (2) his theory of value itself, as based on his psychology; and (3) his ethical theories, particularly his attempt to establish certain absolute or ultimate values. We shall take up each of these aspects of his work in this order in this and the next two chapters so that we may gain a connected view of his system as a whole.

Brentano's theory of psychology is based on his fundamental position in philosophy. Perhaps the best brief introduction to Brentano's whole philosophical position is to be found in his lecture on "The Four Phases of Philosophy" (1895), in which he attempts to show the analogies which obtain in the three periods of ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy. His

contention is that each of these three periods is characterized by an introductory phase of philosophical progress followed by three phases of successive decline in philosophical thought. Thus the typical and recurrent rhythm of human thought is: investigation, practical application, skepticism, mysticism. The following table summarizes the whole argument in a very crude and imperfect way, but of necessity deprives it of all of the rich embroidery of illustrative material with which Brentano endowed it in its original form:

PHASE:	PERIOD:		
	<i>Ancient</i>	<i>Medieval</i>	<i>Modern</i>
Investigation	Thales to Aristotle	Thomas Aquinas	Bacon to Locke
Application	Stoics, Epicureans	Duns Scotus	The Enlightenment
Skepticism	Skeptics, Eclectics	William of Occam	Hume
Mysticism	Neo-Platonists, Neo-Pythagoreans	Lullus, Cusanus	German Idealism

It is not difficult to imagine what Germans of the last quarter of the nineteenth century thought of Brentano for classing Kant, Fichte, and Hegel with Plotinus, Iamblichus, Lullus, and Nicolaus of Cusa! But he insists that the "inconceivable conception" of Cusanus is no more mystical than the "unbelievable belief" which lies at the basis of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. And so Brentano concludes that the way of progress for philosophy is not "back to Kant" as so many of his contemporaries were saying, but back through Kant to the true thinkers who employed the right methods of investigation: Locke, Aquinas, and Aristotle.

The full title of his *Psychologie* of 1874 indicates that Brentano's interest was in just such an empirical study of psychology, and the work is clearly inspired throughout far more by Descartes, Aquinas, and Aristotle than by other thinkers. The first part of it is devoted almost exclusively to working out the possibilities and limitations of an empirical methodology. Most of this from the viewpoint of what we now understand to be empirical psychology is not such at all, but it must be remembered that for Brentano "empirical" refers to "empiricism" of the English pattern. He pays scant attention to Hobbes, and he differs very profoundly from Hume, in fact his work from the epistemological viewpoint might well be regarded as a third great answer to Hume to rank along with those of Kant and Reid.

One will fail of an adequate appreciation of Brentano's basic theory of psychology if he does not note that Brentano always drew a distinction (with varying degrees of firmness) between psychology as purely descriptive (which he terms "Psychognosie") and psychology as genetic (which he held alone to be worthy of the name "Psychologie"). The latter is the study of the causal origin and even the physiological etiology of the mental states and processes described in the former. He himself felt that he had a right to interest himself only in the purely descriptive psychognosy, rather than in the genetic psychology which seeks causal laws and ultimate explanatory principles. At the stage of human knowledge of mental phenomena at which Brentano was contributing to the science, what he felt to be most necessary was not a universality and manifoldness of explanation, but rather some "kernel of generally recognized truth" which might serve (as had proved to be the case previously in mathematics, physics, chemistry and physiology) as a center of crystallization for the development of "a psychology in place of the psychologies." It was probably due to the fact that this distinction had not fully developed in his thinking at the time that the *Psychologie* of 1874 was written (and there are many passages in it which are

essentially genetic rather than descriptive) that he never completed it along the lines laid down in its Preface.⁴

That Brentano represents a turning point in the history of psychology is manifest in the care with which he studies the possibility of defining his science as the "science of the soul," although he finally rejects this possibility on sound empirical grounds, and agrees with Lange in defining it as a science of psychology without a *psyche*, or more exactly as the science of psychic phenomena (*Erscheinungen*).⁵ He realizes that even this definition is apt to involve him in difficulties because "phenomena" may arouse in the minds of his readers the thought that the data of psychology are subject to as much uncertainty as are the data (phenomena) of physical science, on the basis of the epistemological problem of idealism. Again and again Brentano admits and even insists that we have no right to believe of the objects of the "outer world" that they actually exist just as they appear to us; indeed it is impossible to prove that they exist at all outside of us. They are mere phenomena. But this doubt in no way attaches to the objects of the "inner experience"; as such objects of our inner experience they exist for us beyond any possibility of doubt.

The Psychology of Inner Experience

It is necessary, however, for psychology to perfect its method of studying this inner experience and these psychic phenomena in order to take full advantage of this certainty and to be sure what it implies. It is with this question of methodology that Brentano is primarily concerned. His Habilitation Thesis upon his appointment to the faculty of the University of Würzburg (July 15, 1866), which had been selected for debate by his opponent from the list of twenty-five theses which he submitted, was an attempt to prove that the true method of philosophy must in no way differ from the true method of the natural sciences. For Brentano, be it noted,

⁴ Kraus, *op. cit.*, p. 21; Brentano, *The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, Biographical Note by the translator.

⁵ Brentano, *Psychologie*, I, p. 27. (All references to Brentano's *Psychologie* are to the 2nd edition, 3 vols. Leipzig, 1924f.)

there was no difference between philosophy and psychology; his empirical psychology, being essentially a return to the philosophy of Locke, was to be the life-line which would rescue the philosophy of his day from the "morass" into which it had slumped in the teachings of Hegel and Schopenhauer.

Under the influence of Pascal (and Brentano was one of the closest students of Pascal of modern times) he looked upon mathematics as the type and model of the natural sciences, being further influenced in this regard by his researches in the philosophy of Comte—with which, even in the days when he was a priest, he was largely in agreement. He recognizes that there are qualitative differences between the various sciences, and at one point he considers mathematics and psychology as being at the two opposite poles of scientific thought, mathematics concerning itself with the simplest and most independent phenomena, and psychology with the most complex and dependent. For this reason mathematics must be regarded as the exemplar of the real ideal of scientific knowledge, with its laws, deductions, hypotheses, and logically rigorous concepts. On the contrary psychology exhibits the whole wealth of phenomena which must ultimately be taken into consideration in any science, and may be said to represent the extensive goal of all science. Whether or not Brentano allowed the ultimate mathematical goal of psychology to dominate his thought to any extent remains to be seen.

In spite of its similarities to other sciences, psychology must have also its own unique methods; not all the methods which have been suggested are equally valuable, and one of Brentano's great contributions was his critique of methodology. He rejects introspection, one of the chief difficulties of which is that one cannot introspect his own mental states at the moment of their occurrence. He draws a sharp distinction between introspection and "inner perception" which, as we shall see, lies at the heart of his whole system. In rejecting introspection he also rejects Fortlage's "empirical psychology" which he describes as a mass of guesses, elaborate "descriptions" and imaginative explanations. Brentano points out that Comte,

too, had rejected introspection, substituting for it—phenology! Lange had rejected all distinction between inner and outer observation, and considered only those observations reliable which can be repeated by another observer either at the same time or later; Brentano points out, however, that in Lange's theory there is no difference between the mental act of imagining a color and the mental act of seeing the color. Brentano insists upon this distinction, and adds that there is a difference between these mental acts (inner perceptions) and the mental act of trying to see what these mental acts are like (introspection). It is the latter which Brentano rejects as unsound methodology, but he insists that in throwing it out we must not also throw out the inner perceptions themselves. Without them there could be no psychology.

Instead of introspective methodology, Brentano suggests the following: (1) memory of what an experience was like after the experience itself is past; (2) observation of other people, of their acts and words, at the time of having the experience, and comparison of these observations with our own acts and their correlative inner perceptions; (3) observation of activities of mental beings of a lower order, either infants or animals; and (4) the study of mental diseases. Brentano deserves credit for having recognized so clearly the true tools of psychological science.

There still remains the general question as to how far it is possible or advisable for psychology now to undertake the derivation or establishment of its most general "genetic" laws. The fundamental difficulty here is that our psychic life, when we are aware of it at all, is already complex and it is impossible to return in experience or even in memory to the simple psychic elements out of which it was originally composed. In a sense the problem of the psychologist is similar to that of the chemist. But just as the chemist who should assert that the elements composing, e.g., cinnabar were its color, taste, smell, etc., would be laughed to scorn by his fellow chemists, so also a psychologist (as Locke) who finds these sense-elements to be the basis of psychic experience, the

elements of psychology as it were, is equally at fault. Just what, according to Brentano, are the true "elements" of psychology we shall see presently when we turn to the next phase of his work. It is true, however, that the sensations are the *sources* of psychic life (just as they are the *sources* of our knowledge of the elements of the physical world); furthermore these sensations can only be understood in terms of the physical phenomena (light waves, sound vibrations) and the physiological processes (afferent nerve excitations) which give rise to the sensations. Brentano turns therefore to see in how far the elements of psychology can be found in physiology and physics.

At the outset, however, he insists upon the position adopted by Du Bois-Reymond in his "Boundaries of Natural Knowledge" that there are impassable boundaries between physiology and psychology. What he wishes to seek are merely the immediately preceding or accompanying physiological conditions of psychic activity. To this end he presents a criticism of the physiological psychologies of Horwicz and of Maudsley, into the details of which we need not enter, as it suffices us here to say that he concludes that at that time psychology was fully as advanced in its own lines of investigation as physiology was in its, and that physiology was as yet in such an elementary and disputable form itself that it would be unwise for psychology either to attempt to derive its complex and well established laws from purely physiological premises, or to wait in its investigations until physiology should catch up to it. What is striking in this discussion is his tolerance of the possibility of other approaches to psychology besides that which he advocates himself, as well as his own realization of the provisional and temporary nature of psychological theory at the time he was writing.

We have had occasion to note that the discoveries of Weber and Fechner in the psychology of sensation were some of the powerful stimuli to a new outlook for psychology and the social sciences. Brentano turns, then, to examine these phenomena as a possible basis for an empirical psychology, and indeed they

would seem at first glance to be very promising, in view of the fact that psycho-physical parallelism seemed to yield actually measurable results in the laboratory. To begin with, Brentano points out that the Weber theory, as modified by Fechner, stood in need of revision owing to the fact that Fechner had assumed that a just perceptible increase in a physical stimulation aroused a psychic response which was equal to the psychic response aroused by some other just perceptible increase in another physical stimulation. Thus, following the Weber-Fechner method, if when I am trying to distinguish between weights of about twenty grams I am just able to note a difference of one gram, and when I am dealing with weights of about forty grams I am just able to note a difference of two grams, Fechner assumed that these two psychic perceptions, being both just on the "threshold" of sensation were quantitatively equal. Brentano insisted, however, that we confine ourselves to calling them merely "just noticeable differences" whether they be equal or not. In more general terms he revises the Weber-Fechner law as follows:

. . . *If the strength of the physical stimulus increases by an equal amount, the intensity of the sensation also increases by an equal amount* . . . Our law does not demand that as often as the stimulus increases by an equal amount, the sensation must increase by *the same* equal amount; it is sufficient for it if, as often as the stimulus increases by a half, the sensation increases by a third . . .⁶

In other words, as he puts it, the same relative increase in a physical stimulus does not give an equal increase in the sensation (as Fechner tried to insist), but only an *equally noticeable* increase in the sensation. The equality resides not in the external stimulus but in the inner perception.

As thus modified, Brentano finds that Fechner's law furnishes practically the only hope then available for introducing measurement into psychology, although he points out three further serious limitations to its usefulness: (1) the method is applicable only to ideas which are occasioned by an external stimulus, thus neglecting completely all of the centrally

⁶. *Ibid.*, I, p. 99.

aroused sensations or ideas; (2) it neglects completely all of the collateral circumstances, such as the intensity of the attention, which have an influence on the intensity of the sensation (wherein Brentano forecasts some of the results of the more recent *Gestalt* psychology, of which his student, Ehrenfels, is the titular founder); and (3) what is really interrelated in the Weber-Fechner measurement is not an "inner sensation" to an "outer stimulus," but the relation of two "inner perceptions" to each other; viz., the inner perception that one is experiencing a just noticeable increase in a sensation, and the inner perception of the "external fact" that the measuring or weighing apparatus is really recording a measurable difference in the "external stimulus." One may feel inclined to insist that the second inner perception is essentially an outer perception; for Brentano its fundamental psychological significance rests upon its *inner* character. And of course no one since Berkeley has been able to deny that all sensations are "inner."

But in spite of these limitations we do and can speak intelligently of the variations in the "physical" stimulus, and it is in terms of this more or less accepted usage that the Weber-Fechner law does yield results which, while not regarded as being as significant as they once were, are certainly more than merely a subjective ideo-centric system. Brentano insists throughout that, in accordance with his theory of knowledge, the so-called "inner sensation" which is measured by the Weber-Fechner method is not the intensity of a color as seen or of a weight as felt, but is the intensity of the inner *act* of seeing or feeling as the case may be. It was this theory of the "psychic act" which was destined to become, later, the corner stone of the "object-theory" of Meinong, with results of great significance for the theory of value, as we shall see.

Brentano realized clearly that his theory of "inner perception" seemed to be more and more involving him in an ego-centric predicament. His empiricism threatens to become mere subjectivism, as did the empiricism of Locke at the hands of Berkeley; so he now turns his attention deliberately to the distinction between physical and psychic phenomena. He seems

almost to be caught in a net of his own weaving, a net which he had woven deliberately to snare the introspectionists who had been working such havoc in psychological methodology. The only way out for him is to go the empiricists one better at their own game, to be *plus royalist que le roi*. The older empiricism had adopted a methodology which was well enough, but which they followed blindly to their own destruction. The newer empiricism must insist that if in our inner perception we note differences and distinctions which appear to be significant, we must not allow them to be thrown overboard on the ground that they seem to run counter to some conclusion derived from the sensational-empiricistic system. Thus the older empiricism had derived as a fundamental conclusion that there is no way of knowing the outer world (and therefore there may be no outer world at all for all we know); the newer empiricism finds that in our inner perception there is a real distinction between what we designate as "inner" and "outer" or psychic and physical. We cannot substantiate such a distinction by appeal directly to sensational-empiricistic evidence; to reject it therefore would be to commit the fallacy of the older empiricism. The newer empiricism insists that inner perceptions also furnish us with "empirical" evidence; and the distinction between psychic and physical must rest upon such evidence. This is what Brentano has in mind when he says:

An example of psychic phenomenon is offered by every mental image of sensation or imagination; and I understand here by mental image not that which is imagined, but the act of imagining. Thus the hearing of a tone, the seeing of a colored object, the sensation of warmth or cold, as well as similar imaginary states, are examples of what I mean; but equally also the thinking of a general concept, if such a thing ever really occurs. Further, every judgment, every memory, every expectation, every deduction, every conviction, or belief, every doubt—is a psychic phenomenon. And furthermore, every emotional act: joy, sorrow, fear, hope, courage, dismay, scorn, love, hate, envy, will, purpose, astonishment, wonder, awe, etc., is such a phenomenon.

Examples of physical phenomena on the contrary are a color, a figure, a landscape, that I see; a harmony that I hear; warmth, coldness, smell, that I sense; as well as images of similar nature which appear in my imagination.⁷

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, p. III.

In this passage Brentano seems to be making a persistent effort to find a place in his scheme for the purely "physical"—until we encounter the very last clause. Then we seem thrown right back into the camp of the subjectivists, for if we look more closely, we note that there is no real landscape "outside" but only a landscape that "I see." It is here again that the canon of the newer empiricism comes to his rescue; certainly the inner perception of anyone would tell him that there is a real distinction between the physical sciences and the psychological sciences. Such a distinction must not be thrown away; maybe we cannot say, as Ueberweg did, that the natural sciences deal with a world of space and time as such. But Brentano still finds a duty for the natural sciences to perform.

One might express the scientific purpose of the natural sciences somewhat as follows: Natural science is that science which seeks to explain the continuous succession of normal and true . . . sensations of physical phenomena on the assumption that this is the effect on our sense organs of the functioning of a world extended in three space-like dimensions and progressing in *one* time-like direction.⁸

The distinction which cuts the deepest, in Brentano's view, between the physical and the psychic worlds is that the inner perceptions of the latter alone are immediate and self-evident. Furthermore, owing to the dependence of our knowledge of all physical phenomena upon psychic phenomena one may say that psychic phenomena alone are capable of being perceived in the proper sense of the term. This would seem to be a complete acceptance of the idealistic position, or at least as complete as any idealist would care to demand, but Brentano goes even farther.

We said that the psychic phenomena were those of which alone one might have a perception in the proper sense of the term. We might say just as well, they are those phenomena to which there belongs not only an intentional but also a real existence. Knowledge, joy, envy, exist in reality; color, tone, warmth, exist only phenomenally and intentionally.⁹

⁸. *Ibid.*, I, p. 138.

⁹. *Ibid.*, I, p. 129.

This marks what one might designate Brentano's "farthest north" toward the idealistic position. He refuses to go on and admit with Bain that since a tree is only to be known through perception, we cannot say what it was before being perceived or independently of being perceived. Bain had followed the Berkeleyan tradition in arguing that to think of a tree as "unperceived" is impossible, is to try to think of it as not being thought of, to perceive it and at the same time not to perceive it. Rather than admit this argument, Brentano replies,

Just as certain as it is that a color appears to us only when we have an idea of it; so, from this certainty one must not conclude, that the color cannot exist without being imagined. Only if the being-imagined were a factor in the color, like its quality or intensity, would it be contradictory to speak of a not-imagined color, inasmuch as a whole without its parts is in truth a contradiction.¹⁰

In short, one is not called on to do, as Bain has it, the impossible, for the obvious reason that thought is not perception, and even if this were the case, the only result would be that one could think of the tree only if he perceived it himself, but not that one could think only of trees *as perceived by himself*. A blind man can see that he does not see without committing himself to a self-contradiction. "To taste a white piece of sugar is not the same as to taste a piece of sugar *as white*." Brentano insists that if the minimal realism of some sort of physical world outside of and independent of our perception be not granted, it would be incomprehensible how the belief in it had gained "such wide-spread acceptance, such stubborn defense, even among thinkers of the first rank"—an argument which reminds one of the Catholic doctrine of interpretation: *Semper ubique et ab omnibus*.

Brentano's objections to subjective realism would seem to put him alongside of Scotch common-sense realism, and it is interesting to note, therefore, his strictures on the theory of Reid, which he classes as a product of one of the phases of philosophical decadence, as being an "unnatural way" which even Thomas Brown refused to follow.

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 130f.

Thomas Reid . . . thought that in the consciousness of all men there lay a collection of primitive judgments, of which we were certain, whether or not they were self-evident. He called these "Common-sense." It is possible that we should deceive ourselves in them, but undisturbed by this, we must believe them, and can found science on them. Thus—but only thus—can skepticism be overcome.¹¹

He adds that Reid makes no attempt whatever to defend the utter absurdity of trying to found a science on blind prejudices—an attempt which Kant essayed in his *Critical Philosophy*. But whether we follow Reid or Kant, we end up in mysticism, in the acceptance of "principles which are without any insight, immediately intuitive powers of genius, mystical exaltation of the intellectual life . . ." and other stigmata of the last phase of philosophical degeneration.

We can hope to escape from the skepticism of Hume only by recourse to the sound methods which modern science has devised; for instance, the development of the theory of probabilities has made it possible to avoid the ultimate subjectivism into which classical empiricism seemed inevitably to lead. We must frankly recognize that, as scientific philosophers, there remain for us certain fixed boundaries of knowledge (not necessarily the ones listed by Du Bois-Reymond) which we may not be able to define.

In many questions we can win only to probability, in others we cannot even achieve this much to any noticeable degree. But even if all our knowledge is piece-meal, nevertheless there is something grandiose about this patch-work. "Man is the mightiest that lives," says Sophocles; and science, says Goethe, "the highest human power." It is the power that has often carried him further than he has hoped in his most daring dreams . . .¹²

How much this sounds like Pascal: "Man is only a reed, . . . but a thinking reed!"

And so the neo-empiricism of Brentano insists on the primacy of what is perceived in the "inner perception." It does not follow the canons of the older sensational-empiricism into utter subjectivity; nor does it try to save itself from this subjectivity by mysticism. It tempers empiricism with reason,

¹¹ Brentano, *Die vier Phasen der Philosophie*, p. 20.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 28f.

but a reason which is not given *carte blanche*. It is the marriage of Locke and Descartes; Thomas Aquinas solemnizes the union, and Aristotle gives away the bride; but Berkeley and Malebranche are excluded from the ceremony.

This neo-empiricism leaves Brentano with the two worlds of the physical and the psychic; not two worlds so utterly disparate that the problem of epistemology must dominate all science. Nor are they two worlds so intimately bound together as to be merely two attributes of one monistic substance. The distinction between them is to be sought in terms of what is well known to the clearly perceived inner perception of most men—in this sense an essentially empirical problem. Brentano has little difficulty in rejecting the distinctions offered by most previous thinkers: the cartesian distinction between the extended and the unextended does not help much in the case of odors, or of kinæsthetic sensations; the scholastic distinction between “existence” and “mental inexistence” does not help much more. The attempt to characterize the psychical as essentially a simple, one-dimensional flow of events encounters the difficulty that some psychic phenomena are inherently complex, involving, e.g., both an idea of an object and also a judgment concerning it.

Brentano's neo-empiricism does not presuppose an outer world, but it does presuppose an inner experience which can most readily and reasonably be interpreted as reflecting such a world. Thus the fundamental presupposition of his “epistemological psychology” is that beneath every psychic complex lies a psychically simple idea (*Vorstellung*). Our inner perceptions (which constitute our most reliable informants) do not tell us that this is true of every physical complex; there is an idea at the base of every bit of knowledge of the external world, but our knowledge (as we perceive in our inner perception) is a knowledge of an external world. And with that we must leave the more ultimate problems in the hands of the theory of probability.

The methodology which Brentano laid down in his empirical psychology opened many doors to the student who would

approach the problems of psychology with an open mind. And he tried with all his might to close the doors which led to skepticism and mysticism. It is small wonder that he exerted a great and continuing influence on the growing science of psychology—an influence reflected in the fact that a new edition of his *Psychologie* was called for fifty years after its publication. His influence was not confined to the problems of epistemology, but extended into the problem of the phenomena of psychic life itself, and it is in this problem—especially in the phenomena of the emotional and volitional life—that we, as students of the theory of value, are particularly interested.

CHAPTER TWO

Love and Hate

II

LOVE AND HATE

PROFESSOR TITCHENER is reputed to have read Brentano's *Psychologie* with the closest possible scrutiny over a score of times, and to have pronounced it, regretfully, one of the most logical products of the human mind.¹ In no part of Brentano's work does this logical acumen show to better advantage than in his "Classification of the psychical phenomena," which originally formed the last half of the second Book of the *Psychologie*, and which he published as an independent study in 1911 in lieu of a second edition of the whole work.

The Faculties of the Mind

In the first part of his work, as we have seen, he was concerned with that which characterizes—or should characterize—the science of psychology as a whole: with the distinction between psychology and physiology. Now he turns to the discovery of those psychic "elements" out of which he hopes to see evolve the new psychognosy. This task first formulated itself in his mind as the revision of the then accepted classification of what the English psychologists referred to as the "faculties of the soul." His own classification is based upon a systematic criticism of all the previous classifications since Plato. He points out that generally these have been tri-partite, with wide divergences in terminology and concepts; typical of these would be the classification by Bain into Intellect, Sensibilities, and Will, or by Kant into Sensation, Feeling, and Will.

Brentano insists that too little attention has been paid to the basis of classification. Some had been little more than

1. I am indebted to Professor Hoisington for this information.

classifications of the types of object presented in sensation; others, such as those of Krug and of Horwicz, had been classifications of the physiological bases of nerve-activity, into those activities "which function from within out, and from without inwards" (motor and sensory). Brentano adopts as his methodological guide the various possible types of relationship of a subject to an object.

Brentano's classification can be stated in very few words, following the criterion just enunciated. The simplest possible relationship of a subject to an object is when the subject has an "idea" of the object, and as we have seen this is the most fundamental relationship of all, being ubiquitous for all psychic phenomena and the most reliable means of distinguishing between the psychical and the physical. This relationship is possible for all sorts of objects: real, imaginary, dubious, past, present, future, negative, contradictory, etc. In fact this catholicity of the *quale* of the object is the basis of the later developed Object-theory of Meinong. But this does not exhaust the possibilities of the relations of the subject to a given object. Such an object, without changing its character or *quale* as object, can be affirmed as true or denied as false by the same or different subjects. This possibility gives rise to the second elementary class of psychic phenomena, i.e., judgment. And there is still a third elementary way of relationship for the subject to the object, which is independent of the two preceding, namely, the innumerable attitudes which the subject may take towards the object, to be classed as a whole under the general heading of phenomena of love and hate. It will be noted that thus Brentano has united the two classes of feeling and will of the older classifications, and has divided the class of Sensation (Kant) or Intellect (Bain) into the two classes of Idea and Judgment.

There are two points which call for a passing notice here. In the first place this classification is in no sense a contribution to a genetic psychology; we have already noted that Brentano regarded his chief task as being the purely analytical and descriptive task of "psychognosy." His classification does not

lead to any causal understanding of psychic phenomena, but solely to a more clear and logical classification of them, and from this adopted viewpoint it may be regarded as being well-nigh definitive. In the second place his justification of his classification is strictly in keeping with the results of his researches in psychological methodology as outlined above, namely, that the inner *perception* (not introspection) is true and self-evident. He therefore leaves it strictly to the inner perception of the reader as to whether this classification is adequate or exact, although he supports his position with an analytical argument which we shall examine in part. He adduces the fact that a great many students of the question—from Aristotle down to Tetens, Mendelssohn and Kant . . .—had united feelings and strivings in one class; Herbert Spencer also had found only two fundamental classes of the soul's faculties: the cognitive and the affective, so that in this respect at least he is in agreement with Brentano, i.e., in that he unites feelings and strivings. He also finds that Bain was not always so strict in his usage of words as to exclude the possibility that he would accept the union of feeling and will in one class.

As we have said, however, Brentano frankly admits that his ultimate court of appeal in this matter is the inner perception of each individual student—even though it would appear that each previous student has arrived at results which differ in some respects from the results of others. Nevertheless he hopes that as a result of his own inner perception he will be able to persuade others to agree with him upon some fundamental and reliable classification. This leads him to feel that there would then be hope of definitive progress, so that one could the sooner and more intelligently turn his attention to the more strictly genetic questions behind these descriptive matters.

Turning now to his own analytic arguments in support of his position, we may summarize them briefly. His own inner perception led him to feel that there was an analogy between the holding an object as true or false—the work of the judgment—and the acceptance or rejection of an object as

pleasant or unpleasant—the function of the third class of the “phenomena of love and hate.” Furthermore he finds in his own inner perception no grounds whatever for a distinction between the different phenomena of love and hate—just as he *had* found grounds for insisting upon the distinction between idea and judgment. Thus one can easily note that there is a real difference between the bare idea of “man” and the judgment “there are men”; but there is no such readily noticeable difference between the different phenomena of our feeling life. It is true that between feeling at one end of the series and will at the other there is a great difference, but Brentano insists that it is possible to discover a whole series of intermediate phenomena of love and hate such that it is possible to pass from one member of this series to the one standing next above it or next below it by a scarcely noticeable differentiation, and thus it is impossible to say just where the boundary between feeling and will would come. Also he insists that it is impossible to suggest any definite differentia by means of which one could safely mark off the one continuous series into two (or more) distinct series, no matter how closely related.

Brentano offers as an example of his series of phenomena of love and hate the following:

. . . Sadness—longing for the absent good—hope that it will become ours—desire, to make it ours—courage, to undertake the attempt—will—decision arousing to action. The one extreme is a feeling, the other a will; and they seem to stand far from one another: but if one takes note of the intermediate members, and always compares only those standing next to each other, is there not throughout apparent the most intimate connection and an almost unnoticeable transition?²

He continues with the question as to which of these phenomena should be classified under feelings and which under striving—assuming these as the fundamental classes. From one viewpoint it would seem that feeling is present in all of them, from longing, through hope, desire and courage, except that almost all popular usage agrees in excluding it from the simple act of will. Does this furnish the basis for the division? And do all of

². Brentano, *Psychologie*, II, pp. 84f.

the other intermediate mental states belong to the class of the feelings? Brentano asserts that such is the judgment of popular usage. But is there not a kernel of striving already even in the longing? And if one cannot thus effect the break at the point between courage and will, then it would seem that at the best one must accept a twofold division which includes some members of the series under both headings. This, however, would be an overlapping classification, and therefore Brentano insists that he is justified in regarding all of these phenomena as portions of the one fundamental class of the phenomena of love and hate.

Such in brief is the classification of the faculties of the soul as Brentano derives it. It is obvious that such a classification might well serve as the basis of a value theory which would find values to be in some sense parallel to judgments of truth and error. Brentano did not develop a general theory of value on this basis, although he implicitly does so in his discussion of the ethical values. Before turning to this, however, we must pause to present the criticisms which his student, Professor Ehrenfels, offers against this classification of the faculties of the soul, and particularly against this union of feeling and will under one heading.³ Ehrenfels feels that if this be regarded as the final classification, then there is danger that the psychic elements, *feeling* and *desire*, will become merged into the one larger class, and further analysis will become impossible. As we shall see later this would be to strike at the heart of his own theory, and it was necessary for him therefore to subject Brentano's theory to the most incisive criticism at his command.

He confines his attack to the last of Brentano's classes: the phenomena of love and hate.

Brentano had objected to any cleavage between feeling and will, although this cleavage was proposed on the same basis as his own objections to it—inner perception. Ehrenfels recognizes that it is very easy to employ inner perception in the construction of a system of thought and very hard to

³. Ehrenfels, "Ueber Fühlen und Wollen," 1887; *System der Werttheorie*, 1897, I, pp. 10ff.

employ it to overthrow a system already well established in the inner perception of another. In order to disprove Brentano's theory, however, it is necessary for Ehrenfels to find but one case (in inner perception) where one desires without any trace of feeling or the opposite. One such case is when we are suddenly surprised by some pleasant or unpleasant sensation, as for instance when a bend in the road brings us upon a beautiful view, or some scent-laden breeze suddenly meets us in the field. It may be that very speedily some sort of desire will arise in our consciousness, marked externally by a slowing of our pace to enjoy the view or a sudden inspiration of the breath. But if one grant that there can be even the slightest lapse of time between the sudden entrance of the feeling of pleasure and the formulation in consciousness of the desire (as expressed by the *conscious* tarrying of the foot) then Ehrenfels has found a case, slender, it may be, but nevertheless sufficient, he feels, to counter Brentano's argument of inner perception. Or again he adduces the instances of complete bliss and utter despair, wherein feelings may be said to be present without desire, as well as the more problematic case of "daydreaming."

His attempt on the other hand to find a desire without a feeling is, from the viewpoint of inner perception, obviously more difficult, in that scarcely a moment of our waking life is unaccompanied by desire of some sort, even though one might recall cases where the desire present bore no recognizable relation to the actually co-existent feeling. His argument perforce becomes more dialectical. If we fall back upon the well established psychological laws of association and habit, we shall readily find instances where we can at least say that desire does not always bear the same relation to its accompanying feeling—people, for instance, who are constantly engaged in hazardous occupations must not be supposed to have lost or lessened their desire for life merely because the feelings which accompany their dangerous tasks are dampened and

deadened by use and wont. And if one carried such a case to its extreme, he might find a situation where the maximum of desire was present with the minimum of feeling.

In summary of his argument Ehrenfels says:

Let one call to mind a case of feeling without desire, as the case mentioned, when one is suddenly surprised by the pleasant odor of flowers, and let one compare to this any act whatever of the will in the course of the daily life, in which one cannot notice the variations of feeling which accompany it on account of their small intensity, as e.g., when one goes to the wall-closet with the intention of changing one's coat; and now let one try to grasp that common element in the two phenomena, which, according to Brentano's theory must be present. I am unable to find it, and it seems to me that these phenomena, as far as I can see, abstracting from the accompanying images, contain absolutely nothing in common. Brentano denies this, and names the common element "Love or Hate" . . .⁴

In this it would seem that Ehrenfels has been trying to make Brentano prove too much, for Brentano, as we have seen, has clearly recognized that there are very great differences between extreme phenomena of the general class of love and hate. For instance Brentano himself recognized that there were great differences between feeling at one extreme and will at the other, and it was with the view of explaining how such great differences could be harmonized under the one rubric that he constructed the series of phenomena leading by gradual steps from the one to the other. Thus all that Brentano would have to do to meet the present criticism would be to set up another such series having Ehrenfels's case of "pure feeling" at one extreme and his case of "pure willing" at the other.

The real reason, apparently, for Ehrenfels's failure to agree with Brentano's theory is that Ehrenfels, unlike Brentano, is seeking a causal or genetic explanation of the phenomena with which he is concerned and is consequently dissatisfied with a mere description of them. That this is the case becomes more clear if we examine the rest of Ehrenfels's criticism, for if it would be possible for Brentano to answer this first objection by intercalating a series of phenomena between the extremes which Ehrenfels insists are totally unrelated to each other,

⁴ Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 17.

then it becomes necessary to see how Ehrenfels himself answers this argument; namely, the argument that one can proceed from feeling to will by a step-wise gradation of phenomena of which each step represents an almost unnoticeable difference from its neighbor in the series, so that it is impossible to specify the boundary between the two. If one arrange this series somewhat as follows: simple feeling—wishing—desiring—striving, Ehrenfels insists that the break would come somewhere between feeling and the next member of the series, i.e., wishing, (or perhaps desiring). This break is not, however, to be interpreted as meaning that no feeling is to be found at all on the side of the break toward desire, but only that phenomena might be supposed here which, in so far as they involve desiring, could be present without feeling (genetically speaking, be it noted) but need not be.

In order to make this clear we shall quote a paragraph of Ehrenfels's argument *in extenso*:

If one keeps this in view, the claim raised by Brentano involves no more difficulties. The gradation offered by him as an example is as follows: "Sadness—longing for the absent good—hope, that it will become ours—desire, to make it ours—courage, to undertake the attempt—will—decision arousing to action."—The boundary line lies without doubt already between the first and the second of the stages named herein. Sadness is nothing more than an unhappiness-feeling, which arises under circumstances which color in a particular way the entire life-outlook of the given individual. It is among other things very difficult, and also in the present case in no way necessary, to analyze psychologically the peculiarities which customary usage emphasizes as characteristic for certain phenomena, and which in practice one recognizes as such without difficulty. Sufficient for us here is the assurance that sadness in itself exhibits neither wish nor desire. The opposite, however, is true of the longing for the absent good. Longing may be defined as a painful wish for some particular or even only indefinitely imagined object. Longing, consequently, is to be called wishing only when it involves as component part a feeling of unhappiness. (This does not exclude a synchronous feeling of pleasure, as the expression "bitter-sweet longing" testifies.) Longing becomes the hope, that the absent good will become ours, if a certain confidence, which need not grow to a certainty, enters, and offers the occasion for a feeling of happiness. Hope is a confident, happy wish, just as longing is a painful one.⁵

⁵. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 20f.

It is evident that in this answer to Brentano's argument, Ehrenfels does not seek to deny Brentano's description of the various phenomena; we do not find him, for example, insisting that there is a vast difference between any one of the members of Brentano's series and its successor. What he is concerned to do is to show—on the basis of a genetic explanation of the phenomena—that one can discover a fundamental break in the series between sadness and longing. This is a new type of subdivision which Brentano did not have in mind at all, for he had forsworn all attempts at a genetic explanation of psychology, and this criticism is to be regarded rather as an extension than as a refutation of Brentano's argument.

Dr. Oskar Kraus, in his excellent notes to his edition (1924) of Brentano's *Psychologie* replies to this criticism of Ehrenfels in behalf of Brentano. He sees in this objection only the argument that

. . . in "sadness" a "hate" lies included, while a "loving" is predominant in "longing," so that this series exhibits a discontinuity . . .⁶

He suggests that this difficulty can be met by letting the series begin with "longing," which is universally recognized to be a feeling. This answer would seem to throw out the baby with the bath, for sadness is itself one of the phenomena to be included in the general class of the phenomena of love and hate. Furthermore Kraus betrays here a failure to grasp the point, fundamental to Brentano's classification, that the class of phenomena of love and hate was a unitary and indivisible class, and that even though Ehrenfels should succeed in showing that some of these phenomena were more under the aspect of love and others under that of hate, this would, from Brentano's viewpoint, constitute no fatal dualism or division.

Brentano's Value Theory

We must turn now to Brentano's application of his new classification of the faculties of the soul in the development of a theory of value. We have already alluded to the fact that

⁶. Brentano, *Psychologie*, Note by Kraus, II, 289.

Brentano's (implicit) value theory is based upon the analogy which he everywhere observes to hold between the classes of judgment and love-hate. These two faculties are to be distinguished from the faculty of idea (*Vorstellung*) in that the latter merely presents its content to the subject without any selective process taking place. Such a selection may of course be either of the sort which qualifies the presented content as true or false (judgment) or as pleasant or unpleasant (love-hate). Brentano is as specific as words permit him to be in insisting that this acceptance or rejection of the pleasant or unpleasant is *not* the same function or act as the judgment of the possession of some assignable quality—value or worth—by an object. In the first place, if this had been his theory, he points out that then it would have been incumbent upon him to unite the two classes of judgment and love-hate under one general head; and secondly it would be a presupposition that there are absolute, objective values of some sort which need only be recognized in order to be accepted (in the sense of the Socratic teaching); whereas it is Brentano's purpose to show that all values come from the operation of this third faculty itself, and do not exist as independent entities in the objective world.⁷

This position gains support by analogy with the judgment. When I say that A is true, this is not a case of perceiving an objective truth in the world, as one might see a color or hear a sound. It is to be understood only as a statement of the attitude of a subject toward the object A; I must first assert the statement A, and then judge that it is true; i.e., make the additional assertion that if anyone assert A he does so rightly. Similarly in the case of values, to say that B is good is not to perceive the goodness of B as one would its color or smell; it is not even the mere act of acceptance or rejection of B; it is the assertion that if anyone accept (or reject) B, he does so rightly. In summarizing his position with regard to the phenomena of the class of love-hate, Brentano insists:

⁷. *Ibid.*, II, p. 89.

A phenomenon of this class is not a judgment: "this is lovely," or "this is hateful" (that would be a judgment concerning goodness or badness); but it is a loving or a hating.⁸

Thus, according to Brentano, values are the products of the functioning of this third faculty of love and hate, just as intended truth and falsehood are the products of the functioning of the second faculty of judgment; this cannot be too strongly emphasized if one would not be led astray in trying to understand his value theory. Thus as we have just said, to value B is to be able to make the assertion that anyone who prefers B does so rightly—but this assertion itself must not be regarded as a judgment of truth or falsehood, but a case of the functioning of this third faculty of love and hate. In both judgment and the functioning of this third faculty we have the relation of a person to an object, an attitude, and in each case the formulation of this attitude is the work of the appropriate subdivision of the total *psyche*.

It is unfortunate that Brentano was not able in the course of his own lifetime to carry out these researches—as he tells us in the Preface to the *Psychologie* it was his intention to do—and publish his contemplated second volume of the *Psychologie*, which was to be composed of four Books, the first three of which were to be devoted to the study of each of his fundamental faculties of the soul, and the fourth to the problem of the relation of the Mind to the Body, as well as the question of Immortality. About all he was able to accomplish in the rest of the first volume is a survey of the history of his problem and one additional argument in defense of his thesis that the faculty of love-hate is an indivisible class of psychic phenomena. This argument deals with the fact that to many people it would seem natural to divide this class between the will and the feelings. He repeats the argument already quoted above and in addition he refutes the suggestion that the concept of freedom of the will would seem to suggest something unique about the will which is not true with respect to the feelings. (It should be remembered that at this time Brentano

⁸. *Ibid.*, II, p. 90.

was an indeterminist, although he later, as Kraus informs us, accepted determinism.) His answer to this is to insist upon the fact—generally admitted by students both ancient and medieval as well as modern—that it is equally correct to speak of the “freedom of the feelings,” and that in this sense there is no distinction to be found between feelings and will which would split this faculty asunder.

We may summarize Brentano's faculty psychology and its bearing on value theory by reference to his criticism of previous classifications of the faculties, and what he thinks to be their origin. He suggests that the ideas of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful have always been recognized as fundamental norms; in an attempt to find a psychological basis for these norms, on the general assumption that imagination and judgment were products of the same faculty, one assigned the True to this faculty, just as the Good was assigned to the faculty of desire. This gave then the two faculties of intellect and will. It was then necessary to find a faculty to harbor the Beautiful, and one thus came to invent the faculty of feeling. Brentano finds that it is possible, however, to explain these three norms in terms of his own triplex classification of the faculties of the soul as follows: the Beautiful is the norm the objects of which are related to the subject most easily under the faculty of idea, and one may say for short that it is the product of the “highest” or most intense functioning of this faculty; the True is similarly the product of the “highest” functioning of his second faculty of judgment (*Urteil*); and the Good is, as we have seen, the product of the “highest” functioning of the third faculty, that of love-hate. He brings his presentation of these arguments to a close with an almost lyrical passage in which he finds that the ideal of all ideals is the union of these three in one perfection, just as the blessedness of all blessedness would be the threefold enjoyment of this threefold perfection. In this he finds the essence of all the highest religions, Christian and pagan.

In one of the appendices which Brentano wrote in lieu of the projected second volume of his *Psychologie*, and which have

been published by Kraus in the 1924-25 edition,⁹ Brentano returns to the defense of his faculty psychology, particularly in view of the criticism that it would seem that there is just as fundamental a break between desire or feeling and will as there is on his own analysis between idea and judgment. It would seem that one might even set up the ratio that will bears a relation to desire analogous to that which judgment bears to idea. Thus in idea I may imagine two contradictory ideas, but I cannot simultaneously judge them both to be true; and similarly, I may desire two mutually exclusive goods, as for instance to be in two pleasant places at the same time—e.g., swimming at the seaside and at the same time climbing in the mountains—but I cannot simultaneously will them both. But Brentano insists that while in the former case my judgment cannot be regarded as in any sense simply another idea added to the two ideas already present, my will in reality is to be regarded as merely an additional functioning of the same faculty of desire which produced the two desires between which the will chooses. It depends upon the simple preponderance of one of the two goods over the other. Just as the faculty of judgment has its peculiar psychological operation, characteristic of it alone, which we call *judging*, so also this third faculty comes to *full* expression in a unique operation, proper to itself, called preferring (*bevorzugen*). It is true that there is a fundamental difference between the phenomenon of preference and the contents between which preference is expressed, just as there is a difference between the phenomenon of judgment and the ideas concerning which the judgment is expressed. But this is due to the fact that, as we have seen, in the hierarchy of the faculties the faculty of idea is fundamental to and characterizes all the other psychic phenomena.

One could easily imagine a psychic being equipped solely with the faculty of ideation, but lacking all power of judgment or appreciation, the laws of his psychology being no different from, although not as extensive as, the laws we recognize in normal beings; but the reverse, i.e., a being having the power

⁹ Ibid., II, Zusatz viii, pp. 155-158.

of judgment or appreciation but no power of ideation, is unthinkable, for self-evident reasons. And, to continue the analysis, judgment is second in the hierarchy, being the faculty next simplest after the faculty of idea. It has the latter as basis, but does not need the functioning of the appreciations. Again one could imagine a being equipped with the first two faculties but lacking the third; but whether a being possessing the first and third faculties and lacking the faculty of judgment would be unthinkable depends on the following analysis:

It is certainly not necessary that anyone who loves something should think that it exists, or even only might exist; nevertheless every love is a love that something should exist; and if one love arouses another, when something is loved for the sake of something else, this cannot occur unless there is also involved a belief in certain relations of the one to the other. According as the judgment varies concerning the existence or the non-existence, the probability or the improbability of that which one loves, the act of love becomes now joy, now sorrow, now hope, now fear, and takes indeed many other forms. So it seems to be as a matter of fact unthinkable that a being should be endowed with the faculty of love and hate, without partaking of that of judgment.¹⁰

And in fact in several places Brentano makes it clear that as far as the most complete functioning of his faculty of love-hate is concerned, i.e., the will, this is strictly contingent upon the judgment. Thus:

Every will is directed to an act, of which we think that it lies in our power; it is directed to a good which is expected to be the direct result of the act of will itself.¹¹

And again he says, although not quite so specifically:

Before anyone has gained the knowledge, or at least the presumption, (*Vermutung*) that certain phenomena of love or yearning bring about the loved objects, either as the immediate or the mediate result of themselves, an act of will is for himself impossible.¹²

We shall later have occasion to note how fundamental these brief statements are for the whole theory of value of the

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, II, p. 128.

¹¹. *Ibid.*, II, p. 103.

¹². *Ibid.*, II, p. 115.

Austrian school. For the present they will suffice to make clear the interrelation of the three faculties; thus even though one insist upon the ratio, will: desire:: judgment: idea, this proves to be at most an argument by analogy, to be answered by analysis. The will, as expressing itself in preference, is, it is true, more than mere desire, but it is not fundamentally different; whereas judgment is fundamentally different from idea. Furthermore the mutual exclusiveness of the alternatives which characterizes the will is not restricted to will and preference, which are practical activities, but extends also to wishing and other phenomena of love-hate; for even though I might wish either for sunny weather or for rain, I cannot wish for them both at the same time.

CHAPTER THREE

Right and Wrong

III

RIGHT AND WRONG

BRENTANO contributed more than the psychological basis for the Austrian value theory. Although he never devoted himself to the formulation of a value theory as such he did present in condensed form a theory of ethics which ranks as one of the unique contributions to ethical literature. In 1889 he was invited to address the Vienna Society of Jurists, and his address assumes superficially the form of an effort to determine the philosophical basis of the jural values written into the penal law or which should be written into the law. As a result of anthropological and sociological studies then coming into vogue judges were questioning the strict enforcement of a penal code based on the absolute sanctions of the older ethical systems. In view of this problem Brentano entitles his contribution a search for the natural sanction for law and morals; he is willing to go with the anthropological and sociological movement far enough to admit that much of the old assurance and finality is gone, and that if by "natural" one means a sanction to be discovered by empirical investigation "in nature" then it is still to be sought.

He is, however, unwilling to reject the possibility of a sanction which is natural in the sense that it is in accordance with "rules which, in and for themselves, and in virtue of their nature are recognized as right and binding."¹ It is obvious that this definition of a natural sanction goes beyond the mere question of sanctions as such and raises fundamental questions of the theory of values: e.g., rules which are right and binding, which are such in and for themselves and in their own nature, and, finally, which are to be recognized as such. There are thus

¹. Brentano, *The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, p. 2.

three outstanding elements in Brentano's ethical theory which we shall consider in turn: (1) the nature of value judgments as determiners of rules (of conduct); (2) the ultimate rightness of these rules; and (3) the recognition of these rules by human beings.

Value Judgments

When Brentano came to put his address in print, he realized that he had raised questions which far outran the limits of a discussion of legal sanctions, so he changed the title to "The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong." Furthermore he had condensed so much of the thought of twenty years into this one address that to have published it without more detailed discussion of its fundamental points than was possible in that brief hour on the rostrum would have been utterly misleading and even worse than useless. So it is not surprising that the Notes occupy half again as much space as the original presentation.

We have noted that an outstanding characteristic of Brentano's psychology was the re-classification of the "faculties" of the mind—or as Brentano preferred to call it, a classification of the possible attitudes of the subject to the object. The basic attitude is that of ideation; then, when the subject raises the question as to the truth or falsity of the idea as presented, he assumes the attitude of judgment; and when finally the subject takes an attitude of liking or disliking the object, he does so by virtue of the faculty of love and hate. Values are then to be found as the products of this third type of attitude—and it would seem as though Brentano had opened the door wide to a purely subjective theory of value.

To a certain extent this is true; but Brentano holds that values are in some sense analogous to judgments. If a theory that judgments are a product of a special faculty of the mind makes them utterly subjective and contingent upon the functioning of the mind, then one might perhaps continue the analogy and say a similar thing with regard to values. His first task is, therefore, a comparison between knowledge and judgments of value. The two are very similar in that both are

engaged in the twofold operation of accepting and rejecting. In the field of judgment are there cases where the final acceptance or rejection is not subjective, but is brought about by objective or absolute truth? If there are such cases then we may hope to rescue logic from subjectivity, and by the same token there may be a similar hope held out for values.

In the case of logic it is certainly false to say that our belief of a logical proposition or proof is due to the coercion of our judgment by the will of the logician—or of some supreme logician. Similarly we must reject the notion that our acceptance of some presents with pleasure or love, and our rejection of others with hate or displeasure is due to any external coercion. It is equally incorrect to say that we accept a logical proof because of any æsthetic pleasure which its demonstration may yield us, although it is true that for many people a neat and exact proof of a logical or mathematical proposition is *accompanied* by pleasure. Our acceptance is due simply to the operation of our “cold reason.” “The laws of logic are naturally valid rules of judging.”² How are we to find a similar set of rules for ethics which possess a “natural validity” such that conformity to them insures the correctness of our judgment? Many ethicists have recognized the desirability of such canons; Kant sought to exhibit one such in his categorical imperative, which Brentano, following Beneke, rejects as “psychological poetry,” or at least as “absurd.” He contends that one can justify the acceptance of bribes by the categorical imperative, since one cannot will the opposite behavior to be universal without causing ultimately a cessation of attempts at bribery; “therefore the law would be without application, therefore, impracticable, and so, self-abrogated.”³ We need not commit ourselves to a defense of the categorical imperative in finding that Brentano’s criticism of it is rather shallow. If merely willing that a moral law might be universally obeyed were sufficient to cause it to be so obeyed, then all moral laws would be universally observed, and all attempts to persuade people

². *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³. *Ibid.*, p. 10, and Note 10, pp. 44f.

to break them would ultimately be given up as hopeless. That would be a most magical way of attaining the moral Utopia!

Brentano's real reason for rejecting the categorical imperative, probably, was the complete break which it posited between the Pure Reason and the Practical Reason. As we have seen, for Brentano this would involve too great a separation between the faculties of what he wants to consider as a unified *Ego*. He therefore turns to the possibility of finding a strict analogy between logic and value theory—a theory which will explain one in terms of the other, or at least will explain both in terms of some common element. One thing is striking: not only is there an analogy between the second and third items of his threefold classification of the faculties in that both judgment and love are duplex (involving acceptance and rejection) but also this analogy extends to the fact that such acceptance or rejection is justifiable and itself subject to a higher acceptance or rejection. Whether or not this involves us in a *regressus* Brentano does not here consider. In terms of this higher acceptance, he says:

We have now reached the place where the notions of good and bad, along with the notions of the true and the false which we have been seeking, have their source. We call anything true when the recognition related to it is right . . . We call something good when the love relating to it is right. That which can be loved with a right love, that which is worthy of love, is good in the widest sense of the term.⁴

Is Brentano here defining rightness in terms of itself? Had Brentano defined the good as that which is loved or capable of being loved this question would not force itself upon us (although others might overwhelm us). But the *de gustibus* prevents any such egress if one seeks, as does Brentano, the definition of the good. What evidence has Brentano to offer that there is one highest good?

There is one truth; and he asserts, there is no one who recognizes the truth and believes in error. But in contrast to this there are many "who know the better and follow the worse." People do not like to admit that they are in the wrong,

⁴ Ibid., pp. 15f.



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and therefore the testimony of people who admit they are in the wrong as to the existence of the good is, as it were, torn from unwilling witnesses, and is by so much the more reliable. Although Brentano never denies the difference between belief and truth, his *a fortiori* argument here overlooks the equally patent difference between feeling the binding force of what is believed to be the good and knowing that it is the good. If one restate the argument in the following form its weakness becomes apparent: there is error in the world but no one believes X to be true and at the same time believes X to be false; there is evil in the world but no one accepts Y as good and at the same time rejects Y as bad. There is no difference between these cases and therefore the *a fortiori* vanishes. Is there, however, any real distinction between the two cases? Brentano's assertion that there is no one who recognizes the truth and believes error is not consonant with the facts, although the number of cases where people stubbornly "refuse to believe their own eyes" is probably less than the number of cases of people who "know the better, yet do the worse." And even this slight numerical preponderance is at most circumstantial evidence for the reality of absolute values only on condition that there are absolute truths.

This problem brings us to the heart of what Brentano himself designated as his "epistemological" theory of value, and he devotes a great deal of attention to it, particularly in the Notes which he appended to his lecture. This discussion,⁵ more than anything else which he wrote, would justify the denomination of Brentano as the modern Socrates; for, as Kraus points out, he is here at grips with subjectivism, not the subjectivism of the Sophists who sought to make truth relative (for Socrates and Aristotle had put them to complete rout), but the subjectivism of modern Sophists such as Sigwart and Ihering who frankly admit that their concept of the good is strictly subjective. Brentano does not deny that there is much of priceless value in the noblest utterances of some ethical subjectivists and perfectionists; as an example of a subjectivism

⁵ Ibid., Note 28 (Note 34 in the German edition of 1921).

which could hardly strike a loftier note he cites with warm enthusiasm the prayer of St. Theresa, which he translates from the Latin as follows:*

Nicht Hoffnung auf des Himmels sel'ge Freuden
 Hat dir, mein Gott, zum Dienste mich verbunden,
 Nicht Furcht, die ich vor ew'gem Graus empfunden,
 Hat mich bewegt, der Sünder Pfad zu meiden.

Du Herr bewegst mich, mich bewegt dein Leiden,
 Dein Anblick in den letzten, bangen Stunden,
 Der Geisseln Wut, dein Haupt von Dorn umwunden,
 Dein schweres Kreuz und—ach!—dein bittres Scheiden.

Herr, du bewegest mich mit solchem Triebe,
 Dasz ich dich liebte, wär' kein Himmel offen,
 Dich fürchtete, wenn auch kein Abgrund schreckte;

*It is not hope of Heaven's immortal bliss
 That hast me in Thy service bound, O God,
 Nor any fear of Terror's awful rod
 That warns me from the sinners' precipice.

'Tis Thou that mov'st me, God, Thy pain moveth,
 Thine aspect in that hour of awful dread,
 The scourge's fury, thorns about Thy head,
 Thy heavy cross, and—oh!—Thy bitter death.

*Thou stir'st me with such passion, Lord above,
 That I would love Thee were no Heaven in view,
 Would fear Thee though th' abyss should never yawn;*

*Naught can'st Thou give whence love in me would dawn;
 For even hoped I not as now I do,
 Yet would I love Thee still as I do love.*

Nichts kannst du geben, was mir liebe weckte;
 Denn würd' ich auch nicht, wie ich hoffe, hoffen,
 Ich würde dennoch lieben, wie ich liebe.

In ethics the subjectivists are classed by Brentano in two groups: (1) those who deny that there is anything "worthy of desire" in distinction to the "desirable" and who thus make of value theory merely a study of desires as such, without any attempt to evaluate them; and (2) those who, like the Hedonists, declare that everything desirable is *ipso facto* "worthy of desire." We shall see that it would be difficult to classify a man like Ehrenfels in this scheme, for though he bases value on desire, he does not reduce it to desire, and he does not hesitate to evaluate desires. Against the attempt to define value in terms of desire Brentano urges the fact that opposite desires can be aroused by the same sensation, either as perceived by different individuals at the same time, or the same individual at different times. The first of these two cases would not be a difficulty for a relativistic theory of value, but we shall see that the second one dogged the steps of Meinong and Ehrenfels throughout most of their work. Certainly for Brentano desire itself is too fluctuating an element to be used as the basis for the definition of that which is truly worthy of desire.

The Validity of Ethical Judgments

It may be a consolation to feel that there is somewhere an absolute good, but Brentano realizes the force of the demand that he substantiate his assertion by actually exhibiting some values which he can show in some way or other to be absolute. Twice he repeats the question, "How then are we to know that anything is good?" And in answering it he again resorts to his analogy between the good and the true, between the axiologically and the logically acceptable.

At this point Brentano accepts (not without criticism however) the rationalism of Descartes; he admits that our judgments are frequently quite blind, especially when prejudiced or when based on mere sense impression. In contrast

to these stand judgments which "may be termed 'obvious,' 'self-evident' judgments; as, for example, the Principle of Contradiction, ..." This gives, then, two types or degrees of belief, a lower or instinctive and a higher or rational.

In what, then, does the distinction between these lower and higher forms of judgment consist? Is it a distinction in the degree of belief, or is it something else? It is not a distinction in the degree of belief; the instinctive blind assumptions arising from habit are often not in the slightest degree weakened by doubts, and we are unable to get rid of some even when we have already seen their logical falsity. But such assumptions are the results of blind impulse, they have nothing of the clearness peculiar to the higher forms of judgment. Were the question to be raised: "What is then your reason for believing that?" no rational answer would be forthcoming. It is quite true that if the same inquiry were to be made respecting the immediately evident judgment here also no reason could be given, but in face of the clearness of the judgment the inquiry would appear utterly beside the point, in fact ridiculous. Every one experiences for himself the difference between these two classes of judgment, and in the reference to this experience consists, as in the case of every conception, the final explanation.⁶

This passage raises several questions. If the lower or instinctive beliefs "which we drank in, as it were, with our mother's milk," are so solidly entrenched that it is impossible to dislodge them "even when we have seen their logical falsity," wherein then is the superiority of logic? Is not logic the means for forming and criticizing belief? What if Brentano's belief in the "higher" character of logic were itself a prejudice? It is evident that to these questions Brentano could well respond as he does to the one he quotes: "No rational answer would be forthcoming"; and presumably the inquiry would "appear utterly beside the point, in fact ridiculous." It must not be thought that in raising these questions we are merely quibbling or trying to trip him up; it is evident that we must, as he says, fall back on the experience of everyone, on inner observation. It is in the sense that Brentano makes his appeal to the universal experience (to what we have called, in the first chapter, the canon of the new empiricism) that his method may be called empirical; empirical in the sense of the instrumentation and methodology of the laboratory—which distrusts

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

"inner experience"—it certainly is not. On this appeal, carried to the individual reader, his theory must stand or fall.

However widespread the recognition for such a rationalistic theory of logic may be, the existence of a similar distinction in the field of values has been almost universally neglected. Brentano insists, for instance, that Hume "betrays in almost every word that he has absolutely no idea of the existence of this higher class" of feelings of pleasure and displeasure. "How general this oversight has been may be judged from the fact that language has no common name for it."⁷ It sounds strange, perhaps, for one who has just completed one argument by appeal to universal inner experience to burden his next proposition with the admission that it has had almost equally universal neglect. This criticism, however, does not stand the test of fair analysis, for the canon of the new empiricism is not "accept that as empirically established which has received universal acknowledgment," but rather "accept that as empirically established which merits the acknowledgment of any fair-minded and informed investigator who sincerely weighs the matter in the light of his own inner perception." In keeping with Brentano's whole system of thought one might add that it was as natural for Hume to follow the more rigid canon of the older empiricism to the complete neglect of any "higher" feelings as it was for Kant to react against this neglect and turn to some mystical, non-intellectual categorical imperative.

Brentano realizes that the only way in which he can hope to convince one of the existence of the "higher" as against the "lower" feelings is to adduce instances of them. He offers the following as self-evidently to be so considered: (1) The love of knowledge, as we have it for example in the fact that according to Aristotle "All men naturally desire knowledge."

It is a pleasure of that higher form which is analogous to *self-evidence* in the sphere of judgment. In our species it is universal. Were there another species which, while having different preferences from us in respect of sensible qualities, were opposed to us in loving error for its own sake and

7. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

hating insight, then assuredly we should not in the latter as in the former case say: that it was a matter of taste, "*de gustibus non est disputandum*," rather we should here answer decisively that such love and hatred were fundamentally absurd, that such a species hated what was undeniably good, and loved what was undeniably bad in itself.⁸

(2) A second instance is the "right" preference of joy to sadness; here again we naturally regard any one who differs with us as perverse, and are self-evidently justified in so regarding him. (3) Analogous to the first instance of the rightness of the pleasure in knowledge is the rightness of the feelings as such; the "right" functioning of our faculty of love and hate is itself the rightful object of love. This would seem to be dangerously close to circular reasoning. (4) Having insisted upon the rightness of the love of the right functioning of two of our faculties, it would seem strange to have no word for the first faculty of all, ideation; so Brentano insists upon the rightness of the love of ideas as such. ". . . every idea is found to be something good in itself . . ." If catholicity be a virtue, the theory seems to be especially favored; why should one not continue with the list by insisting upon the rightness of our love for "anything at all"; then there would be point to the nursery rhyme:

"The world is so full of a number of things,
I am sure we should all be as happy as kings."

It will be noticed that the first, third, and fourth of these instances of the "higher" feelings are drawn directly from Brentano's psychology. The second might more properly be subsumed as a special case under the third. It is therefore necessary to be clear as to the relations between love and hate, and joy and sorrow. In general one can say that love is the phenomenon of having joy in the existence or possession of a given object, and sorrow in its absence or loss; and hate is the opposite relationship or attitude. One may question, however, whether this parallelism holds between love and hate on the one hand and joy and sorrow on the other, in view of such cases as "sweet revenge" and *Schadenfreude*. Brentano insists

⁸. *Ibid.*

that such a narrow view is misleading. There is a certain resemblance between joy and love, as well as between sorrow and hate; generally a normal person enjoys love and loves joy; is grieved by hate and hates grief. But the cross-mixing of the two pairs is possible and does occur.

In cases, however, where both the joy-sorrow couplet and the love-hate couplet are involved, it is possible to make an additional condition governing "the purely good in itself."

In order that an act of feeling may be called purely good in itself it is requisite: (1) that it be right; (2) that it be an act of pleasing and not an act of displeasing. If either condition be absent, it is already, in a certain respect, bad in itself; pleasure at the misfortunes of others (*Schadenfreude*) is bad on the first ground; pain at the sight of injustice, on the second ground. If both are lacking, the act is still worse, in accordance with the principle of summation of which we shall speak later in the lecture.⁹

Once embarked upon such a program of "combination of goods" there would really be no place to stop until one finally defined the purely good in itself as (1) the true, (2) the pleasing, (3) the rightly loved, and (4) the vividly imagined, all rolled into one. Furthermore, if one is to insist upon the right preference of joy to sorrow, what is to prevent the preference rightly of health to disease, of wealth to poverty, of cosmopolitanism to provincialism, and so on *ad infinitum*?

Within the limits of a single address Brentano could hardly consider all these possibilities; but he does realize that his new principle of "summation" involves him in a break with his much cherished analogy with logic. For if there is one thing which is obvious in value theory it is that values are not merely a question of yes or no, of simple acceptance or rejection; there is also involved always a question of degree. In logic a proposition is always either true or false. In values a thing is better or worse, quantitatively. To what are we to trace this aspect of the matter? Clearly not to any spatial or physical characteristics. He also rejects out of hand the theory that "... 'better' would mean that which pleases with a more intense pleasure" His objection to this view is the purely dialectical

⁹. *Ibid.*, Note 32, p. 85.

consideration that if the greater good implied a more intense pleasure, then, since our mental strength has finite limits, we would have to husband our emotional resources in cases of appreciation of great values; and it would appear doubtful if one could love God "with all one's heart" and have any emotional strength left to love anything else at all! In the Note quoted in part above, however, he insists that if a feeling is good, then its goodness is increased by raising the intensity of the feeling.

A purely relativistic determination of the "better" is possible, and yet strictly in accordance with the fundamental tenets of his system, in defining the "better" as

that which is rightly more pleasing . . . The "more" refers not to the relation of intensity between two acts, but rather . . . to the phenomena of choice . . . Whatever is true is true in a like degree, but whatever is good is not good in equal degree, and by "better" nothing else is meant than what, when compared with another good, is preferable; i.e., something which for its own sake is preferred with a right preference.¹⁰

Thus Brentano relies upon *a priori* self-evident judgments even to order the subjective value scale of better and worse.

Having once justified his principle of summation of goods as based upon preference, he is faced with the difficulty involved in determining the right preference *as between* those values which he has held to be self-evidently good in themselves.

All insight is, we have said, something good in itself, and all noble love is likewise something good in itself. . . . But who shall say whether this act of insight or that act of love is in itself, the better?¹¹

Plato and Aristotle, in keeping with the Greek tradition which first taught man self-confidence in his own reasoning, reduced the latter to a position subordinate to the former; the Christian tradition, which first taught man self-confidence in his religious emotions, reversed the relation.

Brentano rejects the possibility of solving this difficulty by means of the hedonic calculus of Bentham, owing to the extreme

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, pp. 22f.

¹¹. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

inaccuracy, if not in fact the almost total lack,—of measurements of any significance in this field. He does not feel, however, that this handicap of “mathematical inaccuracy” should be regarded as fatal to research in value theory, when conducted with this limitation kept fully in view.

Just as he had solved the problem of *Schadenfreude* by resort to the principle of summation, so here too Brentano finds it useful. “The province of the highest practical good embraces everything which is subject to our rational operation in so far as a good can be realized in such matter.”¹² In other words both perfect insight and noble love are requisite, for

If one person had perfect knowledge without noble love, and another perfect noble love without knowledge, neither would be able to use his gifts in the service of the *still greater collective good*. A certain harmonious development of all our noblest powers seems, therefore, from this viewpoint to be, at any rate, what we must strive after.¹³

The italics are mine, and call attention to the fact that Brentano seems to incline towards Utilitarianism, although in the Notes he is careful to draw the distinction between wishing well for others and actually striving for their good. In fact he defends outright the precept: “Take thought in the first instance for oneself, a precept to be found in every system of morality.” Thus we are left with little or no positive guidance as to what constitutes the moral code valid for all which it was Brentano’s aim to discover. It is true that he actually declares “love of neighbor and self-sacrifice, both for our country and for mankind, to be duties”; and he condemns “lying, treachery, murder, debauchery, and much besides . . .” But to show how these are to be “measured by the standard of the principles we have set up” is indefinitely postponed. In short, to be viewed fairly, Brentano’s theory must be thought of not as a system of ethics or a study of morality, but as a theory of value with a certain emphasis on ethical values by way of illustration.

Nevertheless we will miss the whole point of Brentano’s treatise—hidden away as it is in a few hurried sentences—if

¹². *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹³. *Ibid.*, pp. 28f.

we do not realize that in spite of his harsh criticism of Bentham's hedonic calculus Brentano is at heart a Utilitarian, for whom the "summation of the good" is the final law of ethics.

Not merely the self but also the family, the town, the state, the whole present world of life, even distant future times, may here be taken into account . . . To promote as far as possible the good throughout this great whole, that is manifestly the right end in life towards which every act is to be ordered; . . . Self-devotion and, on occasion, self-sacrifice are, therefore, duties; an equal good wherever it be, and therefore in the person of another also, is, in proportion to its value, and therefore, everywhere equally to be loved . . .¹⁴

In how far the lack of an adequate axiological calculus will prove a handicap for such a definition of morality remains to be seen.

It is as a Utilitarian that Brentano returns to a brief mention of the legal problems with which he had commenced his address. The positive basis which he suggests to the jurist is the necessity for the law to regulate by overt enactments the division of labor without which the advancement of the highest good of human society is impossible. And there is much which the law can never regulate, but which must be left to the control of the moral sentiment of the community. "To be truly binding they need to be in accord with the rules which . . . are capable of recognition by the reason, as a duty of love towards the highest practical good." Slowly but inevitably the realization of the ultimate rightness of the Utilitarian code is bound to seep into the consciousness of all people. "Every one would rather say to himself: 'I am acting rightly' than 'I am acting foolishly.'" This is more true of some than of others. "Enough, truth speaks, and whoever is of the truth hears her voice." This may seem to imply a relativity of ethics; but one must not confuse a relativity which insists that it is final—the out-and-out relativity of Ihering who denies that any moral truth is ultimately valid—with a relativity which insists upon the fact of moral *progress* and asserts that

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 28.

there is a final utilitarian code which is self-evident and which will ultimately gain universal and unquestioning acceptance.

The Origin of Ethical Knowledge

How was it that the common people, in their blind, unthinking ways, have so often arrived at a code of ethics which does not differ widely from that which we thus see to be the result of the most careful logical thinking? Can we attribute this to an "unconscious reasoning process" of the common people? Brentano has heaped too many invectives on the "psychology of the unconscious" to admit of any such possibility. Are these blind, unthinking processes the sole justification for the rightness of the results we have so far attained? Brentano points out how many perfectly correct statements have been known for centuries to be true without their logical deduction from any first principles. (In fact it was in an attempt to explain this phenomenon that Plato had resorted to reminiscence in his doctrine of Ideas.) Brentano remarks that even the lower animals learn to do many things correctly and establish the habit of so doing them without reasoning about the problems concerning them. In many cases, at any rate, the results arrived at by this blundering "trial and error" procedure (presumably unthinking for the most part) agree in substance with the more refined inductions of the philosopher. And it was these more or less blind procedures which prepared the soil for the sowing of the seed of ethical truth. For of course Brentano answers his question with an emphatic negative, on the grounds that to accept these blind selfish processes as the bases of the ethically right would be to allow ourselves to be badly misled by false calculations of the probabilities involved.

Such in brief outline is the rationalistic theory of choice as the basis of the Good which Brentano offered as a means of justifying the utilitarian theory, in the hope that the extension of his method, the summation of goods, would ultimately give us that code of right and wrong which would be universally recognized as valid for all. At this point one fundamental difference between Brentano and the earlier Utilitarians should

be noted: for Bentham and his followers hedonism was assumed as self-evident and was used as the basis for the utilitarian code; for Brentano hedonism is rejected, and the utilitarian code is derived from quite other considerations.

Ehrenfels's Criticisms

We have seen that the most incisive critic of Brentano's theory of psychology was his former student, Professor Ehrenfels; it is not surprising, therefore, that Ehrenfels directed an equally searching criticism at Brentano's ethics, because here also his own system contradicted Brentano's in almost every essential respect—in spite of the fact that the actual results they arrived at, so far as every-day morality is concerned, did not differ by much. This last fact would appear, however, to be of little consequence, as ethical systems have a way of agreeing on final results after the most divergent methods of inquiry.

Ehrenfels commences his study of Brentano's ethical theory by asserting that one is safe in saying that the assumption of a moral code valid for all stands or falls with Brentano's moral theory, because of the thoroughness and logical acumen which mark Brentano's attempt to establish such a code.¹⁵ He realizes that a successful attack on Brentano's position is possible only if one direct his efforts first of all against the fundamental epistemological basis of the whole structure, against what we have called Brentano's new empiricism. It is clear that Brentano's theory has taken full advantage of the canon of the new empiricism in that it insists that the vast majority of people will ultimately come to assent to it as self-evident and in accordance with inner perception. But Ehrenfels asks if majority acceptance—or even universal acceptance—of the self-evidence of any such theory can be adduced as real grounds of probability of its correctness? Ehrenfels here confuses what we have already called to attention as the true and the false statements of the canon of the new empiricism, when

¹⁵ Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," v, pp. 86ff. Cf. his *System*, I, pp. 45ff; *Ibid.*, II, pp. 217f.

he admits that his question can be answered in the negative only if the existence of this universal popular tendency can be explained with *not too much difficulty* just as well under the assumption that it is wrong as under the assumption that it is right. In other words, is one in a position to cite instances where beliefs that have been universally accepted have proved to be wrong? Such instances, as the belief in a flat earth, are, naturally, rather easy to find in the history of human thought. The human mind seems particularly prone to accept certain ideas universally even though they later prove to be wrong. And, Ehrenfels concludes, under such circumstances "universally self-evident truth" ceases to be the hall-mark of certainty. We need only note that this was not what Brentano offered as the basis of his system, but rather he offered as final basis the fact that his system was founded on truths which slowly but inevitably will seep into the consciousness of all; the inner perception of the enlightened reveals the truth which all will ultimately recognize.

Ehrenfels then turns his attention to the values which Brentano had insisted were self-evidently absolute values. For instance, in the case of the rightness of the love of knowledge as such, Ehrenfels raises the question as to whether this comes from its intrinsic self-evidence, or from a preference for success in our other activities—for clearly one could prefer error to knowledge only on the condition that he sacrificed all his other interests, plans, and hopes. Could a man, nevertheless, be imagined who would prefer error on these conditions? Ehrenfels grants that such a creature is logically possible, but psychologically he would be a monstrosity, and therefore the rightness of the love of truth is really based upon the (pragmatic) preferability of successful behavior. Furthermore the love of truth would be in a certain sense inescapable—hence in no need of the support of its self-evident preferability—because the love of error as such would involve in itself the desire for truth in order to know what was erroneous. Truth would be a necessary extrinsic value. Ehrenfels later realized that this statement needed modification in order to include the

case of the man who loves to darken his reason (e.g., by the habitual use of alcohol), but he insists that that is merely to satisfy but not to still the desire for error. Satiety of this desire could not come by an erroneous conviction which was believed to be true; satiety demands that the conviction must be recognized as erroneous. Brentano had already pointed out the impossibility of believing that which we know to be false—in contrasting it with the possibility of doing that which we know (believe) to be wrong.

Ehrenfels has cited here two reasons for accepting Brentano's belief that the love of truth is right, but by implication he argues that since it is right for these reasons it is not right self-evidently. The obvious answer would seem to be that he has made explicit what was implicit in the argument of Brentano, and in fact there is nothing in his argument which Brentano could not accept with good grace. When Ehrenfels turns to some of the others of Brentano's catalog of the absolutely right, he raises similar objections to his argument. He insists that the absolute value of the love of happiness as such encounters the difficulty of the ascetic, whose pleasure may be a real value of a sort which could not possibly be a value for everyone. In general, he insists elsewhere, Brentano's search for absolute values is a repetition of the error of King Midas. He insists that the real moral problem is not to find a value code valid for everyone, but to find the particular codes which are valid for each given case. One can very readily agree with his viewpoint while insisting that this constitutes an *ignoratio elenchi* if used as an argument against Brentano's system. In the case of the rightness of the love of happiness, for instance, the ascetic constitutes no adequate answer, for Brentano has left ample room for values which while not self-evidently universal are still values, just as there are (by analogy) many truths which are not self-evident. Or again, if one insist that there are people for whom "pain" is a pleasure (e.g., the Flagellantes), still it is a pleasure for them, and thus may well come within Brentano's rule that it is self-evident that they should prefer it, not in its quality as physiological

pain, but in its quality as psychological pleasure. Brentano is far from insisting that purely physiological pleasure is the *summum bonum*. This criticism of Ehrenfels will remain more or less of a mystery to us until we have examined his own system in detail, and then we shall see that whereas for Brentano it is self-evident that one *should* prefer his own pleasure, for Ehrenfels it is psychological law that one *does* prefer it, or in other words, for one *not* to prefer his own satisfaction would be a case of inner (pathological) conflict. There is a certain analogy between this inner conflict (*Widerstreit*) and self-contradiction (*Widerspruch*) in Brentano's usage; but this analogy does not justify the attempt to deduce the latter from the former, or make the analysis of Brentano unnecessary.

Ehrenfels does not rely solely upon a detailed criticism of Brentano's system of absolute ethical values. He accepts abstractly the possibility that Brentano may be right; it is simply a question as to whether one is to be compelled to accept Brentano's explanation as a final resort after all other attempts at formulation of a general relativistic value theory have broken down. He insists that if he succeeds in setting up such a relativistic theory on grounds which even the proponent of an absolutistic theory is bound to accept, then he will be justified in rejecting the absolutistic explanation. We must therefore leave at this point Ehrenfels's criticism of Brentano's theory until we have finished our discussion of Ehrenfels's own theory in the course of the present study. If Ehrenfels succeeds in his attempt then the parsimony of hypotheses would demand that Brentano's theory be relegated to the history of the problem.

Before bringing our discussion of Brentano to a close we may well try to summarize briefly his contribution to the abstract theory of value. His chief task was the formulation of a problem and the calling of it to the attention of his generation. Much of this he did, not in his published writings, but in his influence on his students in his seminar. Nevertheless what he published is so ample that we may well ascribe to him the dignity of a founder of a school—were it not for the

fact that he would have been the first to reject the proffered homage. The tenets of this school were not clearly formulated at first; it arose largely as a protest against the excrescences and exaggerations of the existing schools of philosophy. But Brentano posed as no torch bearer; at the most he humbly indicated where he thought the truth might lie.

His chief service was to point out that hopeful investigation must be along the lines of the newer psychology, an empirical psychology, if one employ the word "empirical" in its older connotation. It must be an empiricism which gives full honor and credit to the data of the senses. But it must not be an empiricism which allows this honor to become an adulation which ends in an ego-centric predicament and the problem of epistemology. It must be an empiricism which allows plenty of scope for the "inner perception" of all who think clearly about the questions at issue.

Furthermore, Brentano recognized the importance of the sociological and anthropological investigations then under way, without being able to utilize them in his own researches. He insisted that fundamental to these problems as well as to the problems of ethics and economics, was the problem of values, and that the problem of values was at heart a subjective, psychological problem. Thus far his theories constituted a complete break with the theories then regnant, which were just as absolute in their codifications of ethical value as Brentano hoped to be, but which justified their absolutism on some unimpeachable, metaphysical grounds, or on theological revelation, or on sheer speculation, thus removing the debate from the realm of empirical discussion entirely. Brentano, by insisting on an empirical method thus rendered a great service to future value speculation which cannot be denied. To criticize him on the grounds that his empiricism does not measure up to all of the technical standards of the modern laboratory would certainly be not only anachronistic but grossly unfair, for his heart was well nigh broken when he was cheated of his desire to establish the first psychological

laboratory in Austria, and then, when he had established such a laboratory, to be summarily dismissed in his well-earned claim to be its director. Much of the sad story of the chicanery and persecution involved in this episode is revealed in his book *Meine letzten Wünsche für Oesterreich*, written at the time, when, in self-respect, he resigned from the University of Vienna and retired in voluntary exile to Italy.

That Brentano was able to do little more than formulate these problems is by no means to his discredit as a thinker. A clear formulation is the first prerequisite to a solution of the problem, and in countless instances a live question has proved of more worth for the philosopher than a dead answer. That Brentano bequeathed a live question to his students cannot be doubted by anyone familiar with the literature of the subject. We do not wish to imply in these remarks that Brentano made no progress toward the solution of his problem, or that his speculations have only historic interest. We shall have occasion to note time and again in what follows that when one penetrates to the heart of a problem in this field he is as apt as not to run on to the spoor of the mighty Brentano who in pregnant phrase or epigram has revealed the way in which the solution lies. Brentano, to change the figure, laid well a firm foundation for the superstructure of elaborate theory constructed by his successors. Naturally their most important contributions were made with respect to phases of the problem which Brentano himself left more or less in the form of question rather than answer. We may, then, as a guide to our further study, enumerate several of these problems.

First, as to the nature of the process of valuation. For Brentano value was simply a product of the operation of an essentially simple and indivisible faculty of the soul, just as judgment was a product of another such unitary faculty. But it very soon became evident that such a view was too simple, and that it was impossible to exclude the other faculties from coöperation with the faculty of love-hate in the formulation and expression of values. Furthermore Brentano's theory of the faculty of love-hate itself soon came under fire, and the way

was open not only for a revision of the theory of the operation of the faculties as Brentano had described them, but even for a revision of the list of faculties as such.

The chief question here was raised by the fact that Brentano had referred to the emotions and the desires as though it were evident that they were coördinate members of the class of phenomena of love and hate, or were even merely different names for the same thing. In view of the fact that wherever possible he eschewed questions of genetic psychology, this was sufficient for him, for from the purely descriptive viewpoint little more could be said about them. But as soon as one turns to look at psychological phenomena from the etiological viewpoint the question arises as to whether the emotions cause the desire or the desire causes the emotions. It is evident, therefore, that the phenomena of Brentano's unitary class of love-hate can be described, genetically, from either of these viewpoints. This leads naturally to the question as to the definition of value itself; i.e., as to whether value is to be defined ultimately in terms of emotions or of desire. The answers which Meinong and Ehrenfels offered to these two primary questions will occupy our attention for the immediately succeeding portions of this study; we shall first present the views of Meinong on this question, and in later chapters the views of Ehrenfels, while the question as to the ultimate definition of value will be reserved for treatment after we have completed these detailed studies.

We have seen that Brentano also raised in a preliminary way the question of intrinsic and extrinsic values, and, more fundamentally, the question of the reality of absolute values. Although Ehrenfels criticized his views here, he did not attempt to settle the matter in a definitive way, and we have been forced to adjourn discussion of this problem until we have seen how far he can substantiate his proposal to develop a value theory along strictly relativistic lines. But even though sharp-witted critics can make sport of Brentano's detailed arguments in defense of his absolute values, nevertheless they cannot rob him of the honor of having tried to do for modern

times what Socrates did for the ancient world, and for the theory of values what the pudgy little Athenian did for the doctrine of logic; of having fought a relentless struggle against the easy-going subjectivism which would say that "There is nothing good nor bad but thinking makes it so." Ultimately, in some sense or other, the very possibility of a theory of value hinges upon the outcome of the struggle which Brentano precipitated and which still rages.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Pleasant and the Good

IV

THE PLEASANT AND THE GOOD

BRENTANO had always insisted that he should not be judged by his printed works, because of their provisional, scattered, fragmentary and occasional nature. Rather one may judge his significance in modern thought in the light of the contributions of his students, for he was an intensely active teacher, and almost every reference to him we encounter in the critical surveys of modern German thought mentions his influence as a teacher.¹ The list of prominent philosophers and thinkers in related fields who have been his students and remained more or less under his influence is impressive, and it is already evident that what we have designated as the Austrian School of General Value Theory might well be—and frequently has been—designated as the Brentano School. The objections to such a designation are weighty: Brentano did not regard himself as a Master and the founder of a School, but as a humble student engaged with others in coöperative research into some of the most subtle and baffling problems in the field of philosophy. Furthermore both Ehrenfels and Meinong have taken pains to correct the impression that they were self-consciously the members of a Brentano School; in the Preface to the first edition of *Ueber Annahmen* (1902) Meinong objects strenuously to such a designation, especially with reference to a notice which had appeared shortly before in the *Archiv für systematische Philosophie* where he and Ehrenfels had been referred to as the “value theorizers of the School of Brentano,” in spite of the fact, as Meinong insists, that Brentano had had no direct part in their respective value speculations, and would probably have rejected the tenets of the “school” as erroneous,

¹. Cf. e.g., Ueberweg-Heinze, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, 9th ed., IV, pp. 312ff., and the article by Linke in Schaub's *Philosophy Today* (1928).

which is certainly likely. Also Meinong's name had been linked with that of his colleague Höfler as "scholastics"—with a side-long glance at the "scholasticism" of Brentano, who, as we have seen, in the course of his theological training had become perfectly familiar with the system of Thomas, but who was fully as well acquainted with the thought of other philosophers from Aristotle to Comte, and who was quite independent of any narrow restrictions—as witnessed by his withdrawal from the Church, with all that that meant to one of his sensitive nature, rather than subscribe to the neo-Scholasticism of the Vatican movement. But in any case Meinong could not boast of any such scholastic training—to his own expressed regret. He does not, however, desire in the slightest to slur over the influence on his thought of the teaching of Brentano, although he quite properly insists that since leaving Brentano's Seminar he had been on his own feet and must be held solely responsible for his later theoretical achievements. It is indeed unfortunate that a personal misunderstanding came later to cloud the relations between teacher and student, and it is quite irrelevant to our present discussion to attempt to settle the merits of this regrettable incident.

The connection between Ehrenfels and Brentano is also very close, evidence of which we have in a hundred subtle ways. Time and again he returns to problems—such as that raised by DuBois-Reymond in his celebrated address on the Limits of Natural Knowledge—with which he first became familiar while a member of Brentano's Seminar.² And in one of his latest published works he offers direct testimony to the enormous influence on his thinking of the general psychological methodology of Brentano. One of the fundamental tenets in this methodology, as we have seen, was extreme parsimony of the irreducible elementary faculties or classes of phenomena

2. Cf. Kraus, *Franz Brentano*, p. 155; Ehrenfels, *Metaphysische Ausführungen an Emil Du Bois-Reymond* 1886; Ehrenfels, *Das Primzahlengesetz*, p. 114.

(to which Meinong refers in defense of his right to abandon it on occasion).³ This is expressed by Ehrenfels, in complete acceptance, as follows:

The first demand of this methodology is as follows: absolute clarity in the fundamental elements!—And second; the greatest simplification in the table of categories, and in the assumptions which cannot be derived from the previous assumptions!—Rather make ten pilgrimages to Rome and back than venture to give recognition to some new element or introduce it into your universe of discourse.⁴

A great many of the differences, which we shall see later developed, between the theories of Meinong and Ehrenfels are clearly to be traced to their different attitudes toward this modern form of Occam's razor as expressed by their common teacher. Although Ehrenfels accepts this tenet of methodology, we have seen and shall see again that he is by no means at one with Brentano, and that on many points his system is poles asunder from that of his master.

A still more fundamental objection to calling these men the "Brentano School" is that if the bond of union between them is their common teacher, then there are many other prominent figures who should also be included on the same score—men such as Husserl, Stumpf, Marty, and Hillebrand, to name but a few. In the further prosecution of the present studies such a designation could only be a stumbling block and it will conduce to clarity of thought if we abandon the attempt to find in the work of the men we are studying merely evidences of acceptance or rejection of the theories of Brentano, and look upon their work rather from the viewpoint of the contribution it makes to our understanding of the phenomena of values.

A brief historical résumé of the value speculations of these men may serve to orientate our study; all the details of the relevant bibliographical data for each man will be found arranged in chronological order in the appended Bibliography. The first connected discussion of many of the problems involved in value theory was published by Ehrenfels in 1887, and the

³ Meinong, *Ueber Annahmen*, preface to 1st edition.

⁴ Ehrenfels, *Das Primzahlengesetz*, p. 95.

first complete statement of his theory in a series of articles, 1893-4. This series was really the result of the influence of Meinong. Ehrenfels had been a student in his Seminar at Vienna, 1878-1882, and when Meinong was called to the chair of Philosophy at Gratz in 1882, where he was to do his life work, he continued to direct Ehrenfels's studies. The latter took his degree at Gratz, 1885, being afterwards called to the German (Karl's) University in Prague, where he still remains. So it must be recognized at the outset that the two men exerted an enormous influence on each other, as well as being students of Brentano. Their point of view, however, on many questions is so fundamentally opposed that it is as impossible to speak of a Meinong-Ehrenfels School as to speak of a Brentano School. For this reason we shall present the work of each man separately before considering their mutual relations in detail.

In the same year in which Ehrenfels completed the above-mentioned series of articles, Meinong was moved to publish his own researches, in what he insisted was a very provisional form, in his *Untersuchungen* (1894). This was followed in three-years' time by the two-volume *System der Werttheorie* of Ehrenfels. In the interval between these two publications Meinong and Ehrenfels had cleared up certain ambiguities in their understanding of each other's position, particularly with reference to the concept of absolute values and the definition of value, in a series of monographs, which we shall discuss in detail later.

Other men were also entering the lists or were already engaged in the study of values, and among those more or less closely related to the movement we are considering we might mention Cohn, Oelzelt-Newin, Kreibitz, Eisler, Schwarz, Lipps, Cathrein, Staudinger, Mackenzie, Barth, Witasek, and Kraus. The last named is of particular importance in view of his close relation to Brentano, as we have noted in the first chapter, and also because of his incisive researches into the history and philosophy of the concept of values in economics and law. This does not imply that the other men named are not also

worthy of close study, but such an investigation into the collateral figures of this movement must be postponed until we have a clear understanding of the central actors.

After the turn of the century the activity of Meinong and Ehrenfels in value speculation diminished somewhat, so far at least as the general theory is concerned, owing to the pressure of other studies. Ehrenfels had contemplated a third volume to his *System*,⁵ but he contented himself with a separate and smaller summary of his whole theory called *Grundbegriffe der Ethik* (1907), intended as an introduction to his discussion of sexual ethics which had occurred in a lengthy and very polemical series of articles which he began publishing in 1903. About this time we have also from his pen the very promising beginning of a theory of æsthetics, *Was ist Schönheit?*, a beginning which he was compelled to abandon, as he explained in a letter to the writer, owing to other and distracting interests. That Ehrenfels could have contributed much to æsthetic theory follows from his works of musical criticism (particularly dealing with the Wagnerian controversy) and his own allegorical dramas and choral dramas. More recently his interest has returned to the psychological analysis based upon his theory of *Gestaltqualitäten* (1890).

Except for the polemical Chapter VIII of the 1902 edition of his work on assumptions (*Ueber Annahmen*) and the first part of his article "Ueber Urteilsgefühle" (1906) Meinong remained practically silent upon value problems as such—although he does investigate such related problems as the psychology of the emotions—until the Bologna Congress of Philosophy, where he presented a very condensed statement of some changes of his views, and some criticisms of opposing views (1912); the latter half of his paper before the Vienna Academy (1917) is very important as containing a complete restatement of his theory, although presented in such a form as to make it difficult to draw from it a systematic statement of his new value theory. After his death, a manuscript which lay almost ready for the printer (*Zur Grundlegung der allge-*

⁵. Cf. Ehrenfels et al., *Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum 15ten Jahresbericht (1902) der Philosophischen Gesellschaft an der Universität zu Wien*, p. 65n.

meinen Werttheorie) was published under the editorship of his colleague, Professor E. Mally (1923) in lieu of the republication of all of his work on value theory which had been projected as Volume III of his *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, a plan which unfortunately had to be abandoned owing to the economic crisis following the war. Some of his contributions to ethics remain as yet unpublished⁶ and it is to be hoped that means may yet be found for editing and publishing at least his *Ethische Bausteine*.

It is perhaps better to overlook the matter of exact priority in the publication dates of Ehrenfels's first articles, in which we are amply justified by the fact that they were the result of the influence of Meinong, as Ehrenfels himself frankly admits both at the beginning of the series and at the end. We can understand the development of the thought of the school best if we commence our studies of these two men with the work of Meinong.

The Influence of the Economists

There is apparently little in the life of Meinong that illuminates his work. The son of an Austrian army officer and member of the nobility, Meinong's own interests early turned to academic studies. His active study of philosophy was occasioned by the necessity of offering it as one of his minor studies—in the course of which he attempted to explain the difficulties in Kant's Critical Philosophy before he had ever studied any systematic courses in philosophy. He took his degree in 1874 with a Dissertation (in history) on Arnold von Brescia; and it was in following these historical interests that he entered the Law School of Vienna that Fall as "ordinary student." He had already attended there for two semesters the lectures on national economy delivered by Carl Menger which were to lay the basis for the doctrines of the Austrian School of Economics. Meinong believes that he was a member of the first class that Menger taught at Vienna; and he recognizes that Menger's influence on his later value theory was

⁶ Cf. Meinong, *Zur Grundlegung*, p. 117.

very great. Before the end of the year he had definitely decided to abandon history for philosophy, had made the acquaintance of Franz Brentano, and had entered upon that series of researches into value theory which after twenty years came to fruition in the series of writings which we have mentioned.

It is not surprising, as a result of the economic influences upon Meinong, that he commences his value analysis with an attempt to define value following the accepted concepts of Menger and von Wieser. He is, however, speedily dissatisfied with them in that they content themselves with defining value in terms of needs and the satisfaction of wants, whereas he finds many difficulties with such a definition. There are, for instance, many cases where there are no wants as such in existence, and yet where greatly increased value can be thought, or actually introduced. Thus a peasant who has no knowledge of a mowing machine feels no want of this, but it would nevertheless be of value to him. Here there is the possible objection that although the peasant may have no want for a specific mowing machine, yet the labor otherwise necessary in mowing is a disutility, and he has a perfectly general (or as the economists put it) an unlimited want for anything which lessens labor or removes a disutility. So Meinong adds a second illustration: people living a hundred years ago in cities between which no railroad existed or was even thought of might never have had the slightest idea of going over to the other city to see their friends, and without any such idea surely no want for the abstract "ability to travel a hundred miles a day" could be said to exist in unlimited extent. Furthermore, to go to see one's friends cannot be regarded as in any sense an economic good or utility, and hence does not come under the economists' category of such goods for which we have an unlimited want. Nevertheless, if the railroad had actually existed between the two cities, it would have increased the value of life for the inhabitants in a purely non-economic as well as in an economic sense. This case is cited by Meinong as an extreme instance, and he agrees to make whatever assumptions may be necessary in order to illustrate his point. We must keep it distinctly

separate from the case of a "luxury good," which is a strictly economic category, although one which as yet has defied almost all efforts at economic analysis.

Having found it impossible to define value in terms of want, Meinong next investigates the other definition of value proposed by the economists, that in terms of use and usefulness. This would be a fairly easy matter if values were such that the value object always caused an immediate result directly related causally to some intrinsic value such as pleasure. But in the case of the usefulness of the art of handwriting to the little child in school who is under the necessity of learning it with such difficulty, there is no pleasure as the immediate result of the valuable object. Here it may be that the ability *will* cause pleasure (and hence prove useful) in the future, but *pleasure* and *cause of pleasure* are two different things, and in fact in cases where the former is the dominant idea we do not speak of usefulness ordinarily at all but of pleasantness. Meinong expresses this as follows:

. . . the customary usage refuses to employ the expression "usefulness" just exactly in situations where one has to do with anything like immediate pleasure-causation. A tasty fruit, a charming work of art one is accustomed to refer to as pleasant but not useful . . .⁷

Agreeable and useful are in a sense opposite terms, the former to be applied in cases where pleasure is the immediate effect, the latter in cases which lead only mediately to some ultimate pleasure or other value. (It is true that Meinong confines his argument here to pleasure as the typical value; whether he was in so far a hedonist must be reserved until a little later in the discussion, but at any rate we may easily expand his argument as we have done.)

There is another side to the difficulty of defining values in terms of usefulness; namely, that it often happens that something has value without its being possible to trace any direct causation of pleasure from the value object as such. In the case, e.g., of the miser, the idea of his fire-proof safe causes pleasure—as the result of memories of pleasure sensations

⁷. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 11.

he experienced at one time previously when he saw his hoard safely guarded therein. But it is clearly not the value-object, the safe, which causes the pleasure, for he can think of a similar safe in the possession of another person, and his hoard ensconced therein, without any resultant pleasure for him, or rather with actual displeasure as the result. Or he can think of such another safe as coming into his possession through gift or purchase "on sight unseen," and the idea is pleasant even before he has seen his new purchase or put his hoard in it. One might easily continue such hypothetical analyses to great length without doing more than laboring a point which is fairly obvious, but which is fundamental for the later development of his theory. Meinong summarizes the difficulties of defining value in terms of usefulness as follows:

. . . one who attempts to define use and usefulness by the concept of pleasure-causation defines too broadly in that he includes therein the notion of the "pleasant," and even really substitutes the "pleasant" for the useful itself; at the same time he defines too narrowly in that there are many cases of usefulness which he cannot include that are related to pleasure in other ways than causally.⁸

And since, as we have seen, Meinong is taking pleasure as a typical value, if use cannot be defined in terms of pleasure-causation, then value cannot be defined in terms of usefulness. His final position is that instead of deriving the value concept from the concept of usefulness we derive the latter from the former. It should be noted in passing that Meinong also mentions at this point the question as to whether value can be derived from the concept of desire, but since this is the definition which Ehrenfels adopts as fundamental, it will be better to reserve discussion of Meinong's reasons for rejecting it—in so far as he does reject it—until we have seen what were Ehrenfels's theories.

Although Meinong thus apparently turns his back upon the economists' methods of defining value—as satisfaction of wants or as based on usefulness or on desires—it should be noted that he was nevertheless profoundly influenced by them,

⁸. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

and in fact made a very valuable contribution to the further development of their theory, which we shall discuss in the course of Chapter VIII. His only objection to their general theory was that they did not realize the necessity of the extension of the value concept to other fields than economics and even insisted that economics was ultimately the only field of values.

Value Meaning

Having rejected the economic theory, it became necessary for Meinong to find a new basis for his value definition, a basis which will retain all of the merit he finds in the economic theories of the Austrians, and yet which will avoid the ambiguities and debated points which he has encountered or invoked in the formulations he has just rejected. Meinong puts his problem very simply:

If I say of a thing that it is a value for me, I thereby place myself in a very special relationship to this thing, I gain a particular psychological experience, through which the thing has gained for me a characteristic meaning.⁹

What is the nature of this characteristic "value meaning" of the object? Meinong continues his empirical research by positing the case of a concert artist who places a value on the applause he receives. But surely it isn't in the rapid movement of hands, except in a most limited, derived sense, that he can possibly be said to be interested. "The characteristic meaning" which constitutes an essential feature of value in Meinong's view is, then, at least partly judgmental in character; there must be some sort of intellectual mediation between the rapid movement of the hands and the feeling of value. The artist who hears his audience applaud ascribes value to the applause *because and only in case he makes or can make the judgment that the applause signifies genuine pleasure on the part of his audience.*

But before proceeding, a further and very important distinction in terminology should be noted. Meinong takes this occasion to distinguish between the meaning of *Werthalten*

⁹. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

in which he is here interested, (and which is a *psychological experience* involving the emotions and the judgments at the same time in a way shortly to be investigated) from the homonym *Für werth halten*, which is the purely intellectual evaluation of an object which may well be as utterly indifferent to me as the ice on Greenland's Icy Mountains, although I could engage in the intellectual evaluation of the "cash-value" of this ice. For an English-speaking person this difficulty takes a different form from the distinction between these German homonyms, but nevertheless the confusion of ideas is just as insidious, and must be cleared up before any value theory can proceed. There are and have been, of course, many value theories which were strictly intellectualistic, for which valuation was the formation of "value judgments" which were not merely analogous to the rational judgments of logic, but simply were such judgments. We have seen above that Brentano agrees with the position here expressed by Meinong, or perhaps we might more properly say that here we have an instance of the influence of Brentano on Meinong, in that Brentano also insists that there is no more than an analogy between judgment and the phenomena of love-hate. The difficulty has perhaps best been expressed by Mr. John Dewey in his chapter on "Judgments of Practice," where he says:

But unfortunately for discussion, "to value" means two radically different things; to prize and appraise, to esteem and to estimate; to find good in the sense described above, and to judge to be good, to *know* it as good . . .¹⁰

If we keep this distinction in view, we must look upon value, according to Meinong, as something more than merely a judgment. But although Meinong agrees with Brentano in the respect just noted, he differs with him fundamentally as to the way in which value judgments differ from truth judgments; they are not merely analogous, but the truth judgment enters into the value judgment as an integral part of it. The concert artist does not merely make a value judgment with regard to the applause. He makes (or can make) a real "epistemological"

¹⁰. Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 334.

judgment concerning it, a judgment which in another situation might be perfectly neutral, a colorless judgment of fact. But in the given situation the value object, which is also the object of this judgment, acquires "a characteristic meaning"; it acquires this meaning because the judgment is accompanied by a feeling-tone of a definite character, or more generally by some sort of emotional over-tone. Value, then, is to be defined in terms of emotion *and* judgment; it is to be distinguished from all other emotions in that it is *inextricably associated* with an existence judgment. As Meinong does not wish at first to insist that a value object cannot under some conditions directly cause the value emotion, he is at first a little cautious, and contents himself with saying:

. . . thus we can say simply: where the value object does not cause the value emotions, there a *judgment* of the existence of the value object is the cause of the value emotion; it is the judgment which here sets up the relation between value emotion and value object . . .¹¹

Here we have immediately the question as to the nature of the relationship between the judgment and the emotion; for instance one may ask if the relation is a causal one, a suggestion on which Meinong frowns, although without specific analysis. This problem is really all of a piece with the much more generally recognized problem of the relations of a thinking being to an objective world. Meinong waives all debate on this point by the admission that if this constitutes a real difficulty for anyone then he need expect no enlightenment here. In so far as these objections constitute genuine difficulties, they are just as embarrassing for any other value theory as for this one, and therefore Meinong feels that he is absolved from more detailed consideration of them, and he forthwith relegates them to the student of epistemology, in whose charge they really belong. So far as the theorizer on values is concerned they can simply be cancelled out of the debate—"the ego-centric predicament."

There is one other aspect of this elementary psychological analysis of valuation which must not be overlooked. We have

¹¹. Meinong, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

seen that Meinong avoids a strictly causal-utilitarian definition of value. Nevertheless the concept of pleasure and of pleasure-causation is never far from his thought. What then is his attitude toward hedonism, or toward value as the value-of-a-cause-of-pleasure? He does not mention the term directly, so we must seek his views by analysis. We have already noted that he shows the futility of the attempt to define use and usefulness by the concept of pleasure-causation. But he concedes that to regard pleasure as a value is a wide-spread habit of mind. Stated in its broadest terms hedonism may be taken to mean the recognition of a direct causal relation between a cause or occasion of pleasure and the corresponding value. As we have noted, Meinong's view involves some sort of existence judgment as an essential element in a value judgment. But need this be directed to the existence of an actual, direct cause of pleasure? We may pass over several illustrations which might help to advance the argument a little, in that he admits that possibly they are what might be termed in English "far-fetched"; he finally pins his case on the following illustration:

. . . the everyday commonplaceness of which should dissipate the appearance of being under the necessity of recourse to artificial fictions or fabrications in order to adduce instances contrary to pleasure-causation in value discussion . . . ¹²

This final illustration is the case where—through some indirect means—I know that on a given day a certain pleasure is coming to a friend (and we may presume that I shall derive satisfaction from knowing of the pleasure of my friend). I send a telegraphic felicitation on the appointed day before I have received direct confirmation of the existence of the object of pleasure. Meinong's argument now is that the distant event is a value-object for me, but that it cannot be regarded as a cause of my pleasure, because the causal nexus first recedes into the past, to the occasion when I learned of the (then future) certainty of the event, and then returns to the present *via* the reasoning whereby I conclude that the given event is due to occur at the time specified. Such a round-about process could

¹². *Ibid.*, p. 20.

not be regarded as a direct causal nexus. On this basis Meinong rejects the concept of pleasure-causation as in any sense fundamental to the definition of value, although frequently of importance in understanding value phenomena.

We have noted above that Meinong did not at first wish to exclude the possibility of a direct causation of pleasure from the value-object. Having here offered some cases which definitely exclude the possibility of defining value in terms of pleasure-causation, it is now necessary to see if value can *ever* be so defined. If one goes to the other extreme and takes cases where the value is clearly very closely related to the causation of pleasure, can one say that even here the value feeling is the pleasure feeling?

The value that I place on a stove is certainly based on the comfort of the warm room, which the stove helps me to have. But the valuing of the stove surely is not therefore a sensuous feeling; i.e., a temperature sensation. But if then the value emotion and the feeling occasioned by the value-object do not coincide, then the question arises as to what it is that sets up the relation between the value object and the value emotion, just as much for the case of pleasure-causation as where there is no such causation.¹³

And the answer to the question is that again it is the existence judgment which ties the two together, a conclusion which makes Meinong's theory of the value judgment perfectly universal.

If value is thus defined strictly in terms of what he calls "value emotions," inclusive of their implicit or expressed existence judgments, then it would seem that a thing can have value only when some one is actually experiencing these special emotions with respect to it. In order to avoid such a completely subjective theory as this, Meinong insists that value is not the being valued solely in the immediate case, but that value is the generalized possibility of being valued under "favorable circumstances" (*günstigen Umstände*.)

In general,^F thus, one can say: value is not dependent upon the actually being valued, but upon the possible valuation; and even here in addition favorable circumstances, that is to say adequate orientation, as well as

¹³. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

normal mental and emotional life, must be insisted upon. Value is based not upon the being valued, but upon the possibility of being valued, under the presupposition of the necessary favorable circumstances.¹⁴

It is true that Meinong does not take the pains to analyze these presupposed favorable circumstances, or the laws by which one could tell from a given actual value emotion what is the underlying true value. This, however, would carry us over to the question of absolute values, which it will be more advantageous for us to postpone until we can treat all aspects of the question together, (See Chapter IX.) This much at least can be said for Meinong's formula, that sometime and somehow each value object will awaken (under the favorable circumstances) the value feelings which represent its real worth.

This reference to the necessity of favorable circumstances for the accurate functioning of his value definition may be liberally interpreted as an instance of the tentative character of Meinong's value speculations. To draw an analogy from the "exact sciences," Halley might very well have said that the comet which now bears his name would return to perihelion in 75 years "under favorable circumstances," thus expressing the enormous complexity of the problem and the provisional nature of the solution proposed for it. It is indeed far better for one conducting researches into such a highly speculative field as value theory to be perfectly aware of their tentative character, than to attempt to reach a premature fixity and finality.

Meinong meets the objection to the complexity and inadequacy of his value definition by pointing out that we are all accustomed to deal with concepts equally vague and unsatisfactory, by a sort of mental short-cutting which is essential to our practical life. This, as well as the question discussed in the preceding paragraph, is really a problem in methodology of research, and one would certainly be compelled to grant the greatest freedom possible to a pioneer in such a field as this. Such ultimate questions may safely be left to adjudication by

¹⁴. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

the pragmatic test of the success of the final theory which results. Let us turn then to the further study of this theory.

Judgment Feelings

To say that values are a composite of judgments and feelings or emotions is not to solve the problem but merely to rephrase it. It becomes a question of the relationship of these two faculties or activities of the mind; in so far as Meinong makes use of this type of classification of the faculties he may be said to be a disciple of Brentano, but the extent to which he abandons the faculty psychology of Brentano in all except this broadest aspect is seen very clearly in Meinong's chapter on "Judgment Feelings." In this name which he selects for them one sees the extent to which his concept goes, for these emotions are not merely the accompaniments of the existence judgment, but they are an integral part of the judgment, such that the judgment-feeling is different both from the other emotions (as e.g., the idea-feeling) and from the pure judgment. It is true that his theory of judgment is essentially the same as Brentano's; that there are certain characteristic marks which differentiate the judgment completely from the other aspects of our mental life; and although the idea is always involved in the judgment, in that, of course, we must form an idea of every object concerning which we form a judgment, yet in the judgment there is something more, which marks it off from the mere idea; the judgment involves in addition an *affirmation* or *denial*, and this can never be the result merely of the addition or subtraction of ideas as such.

My assertion, thus, that a characteristic feeling-meaning gets attached to the judgment over and above what attaches to mere ideas, according to which I can talk of judgment-feelings as against idea-feelings, remains in any case understandable and debatable.¹⁵

In view of such an assertion it is clear that Meinong has abandoned entirely the tri-partite classification of the possible attitudes of the subject to the object so dear to Brentano; at

¹⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

the most there are two primary "faculties": idea and judgment, each of which is qualified by the feelings which are a part of it. It is necessary for him to turn then to an analysis of the relations of these emotions or feelings to their respective ideas or judgments, and he commences with the relation between ideas and feelings. He points out that there are two customary ways of regarding this relationship: (1) causally: "the landscape gives me pleasure," and (2) as a form of coincidence or concomitance: "I rejoice in the landscape."

Before we can decide this question it is necessary to examine the relations of dependence and independence as between ideas and other mental phenomena, and see how it may be that the popular notion of this causal relationship arose. By analogy one can say that our ideas of colors are relatively independent of each other, but that the idea of relation between colors is dependent, in that the relation could not exist without the colors. Here Meinong introduces a consideration from his own Gegenstandstheorie which at that time had been worked out only partly; viz., that in the ideational field an ideational content is relatively independent of the act of ideation, just as in judgment the act of judging is independent of the content of the judgment; in short that a mental phenomenon possesses at least two aspects, the *act* and the *content*, which must not be confused with either the "subject" or the "object." How far, then, can this concept of dependence, analogous to the dependence of the idea of the relationship between colors upon the ideas of the colors themselves, be applied to the relationship between the different aspects of the mental life which are apparently fundamental to the value experience: ideas, judgments, feelings? In other words, can an idea be independent of a judgment or feeling, or *vice versa*?

We may recall that Brentano had solved this problem by arranging his three possible attitudes of the subject to the object in an ascending order, such that ideas are primary and independent of all the others, that judgments depend upon the ideas which furnish their contents but are independent of any feelings which may accompany them, whereas feelings of

love-hate are dependent both upon ideas and upon judgments. Meinong had already abandoned this position in that he had drawn the distinction between act and content, a distinction foreign to the thought of Brentano. Meinong is naturally a little cautious at this point in asserting his theory, which did not come to full statement until he wrote his article "On Objects of Higher Order," in which he calls attention to the fact that his *Gegenstandstheorie* as it finds expression in the *Untersuchungen* is inadequate and ambiguous. Nevertheless we are here primarily interested in value theory rather than object theory, so we may content ourselves with such formulation of the latter as we find in the work before us, which was the form in which it exerted its first influence in forming his value theory.

The case is very complex in dealing with emotional contents as dependent on or independent of idea contents because of the confusion of thought which is apt to arise between "indifferent contents"; i.e., idea contents without feeling accompaniment or concomitant, and "contentless emotions" or "objectless feelings" (such as the undefinable moods which occasionally come over one without any apparent specific object or cause). We shall discuss these two possible cases in turn. (1) With regard to the former he points out that the (theoretical) impossibility of cases of "indifferent contents" is certainly not the point at issue, inasmuch as the appearance of indifferent contents is "anything but seldom," and demands theoretical explanation.

(2) With regard to "contentless emotions" Meinong points out that it happens frequently that in a complex situation one may make a mistake between the real content of a feeling and a falsely imagined content, as in the case of the housewife, who, when the cook has broken a dish, asserts with firm conviction that it was not the loss of the dish which disturbed her and caused her anger, but the frivolousness of the cook. Presumably what Meinong has in mind is that the mistress, unwilling to admit that it was her penuriousness which caused her emotional outburst, is only too happy to rationalize it to

the disadvantage of her servant when the latter inadvertently reveals her frivolousness; this constitutes a case of mistaking a quite incidental and irrelevant idea-content for the real emotional content. In fact Meinong reaches the rather general conclusion that it may be very easy for the real occasion or stimulus of a given feeling or emotion to remain hidden owing to the complexity of the environment in which we find ourselves, and thus it becomes very difficult to discover the original emotional content, so that we may be led to regard many emotions as "contentless." The case becomes still more complicated when one considers the causal relationships involved, such that many ideas are only mediately instrumental in bringing about a given emotional feeling. Thus he satisfies himself that there is perhaps no such thing as a contentless feeling or nameless fear, or that at best such terms are misnomers. In fact Meinong feels that he can assert with *a priori* certainty that

. . . an emotion without content is no less absurd than an idea without content; emotion, like idea, is not independent of content. But since the psychically given content is always an idea-content, so further the emotion is dependent upon the corresponding idea. In this sense, without indeed having to appeal to a causal relationship, the idea is primary as against the emotion; and I will express this through the phrase: the idea is the psychological *presupposition* of the emotion, since there is not, nor can there be, an emotion which in its manifestation is not dependent upon this presupposition.¹⁶

It is from this that Meinong's theory derives its characterization as a "presuppositional" theory of value. Meinong admits that his concept of presupposition is, perhaps, only an *ad hoc* invention which may not suffice to exclude the popular notion of causation as between idea and emotion.

Having cleared up the relationships between idea and emotion, the problem arises as to the function of the judgment in such situations. A judgment sometimes serves as a co-presupposition (*Mitvoraussetzung*) for a feeling; all feelings have ideas as presuppositions, and in addition some have judgments. To distinguish these two types of feeling Meinong calls the

¹⁶. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

former "idea feelings" and the latter "judgment feelings." Nor does this exhaust the possibilities of the analysis; one may also have emotions which have as presuppositions other emotions (*Gefühlsgefühle*) and at other times desires (*Begehrungsgefühle*). As an example of the former he suggests the case of the little child who first learns to cry at his own bumps and knocks when he observes the sympathy which his tumbles arouse in others; in view of the fact that he did not cry when he fell before, one cannot say that it is the tumble which causes the feeling. And as an example of the latter he offers the case of the emotion we have at the satisfaction of a desire—regardless of the value of the desire-object, or whether the desire-object still possesses or ever really possessed the capacity of satisfying the want which gave rise to the original desire, as for instance when one says, "There, I've finished that job—at last!"

There is still another group of emotions which we shall see later to have a very considerable rôle in the evolution of his thought, so we must pause at least long enough to see how far his thought had developed with regard to them at this time. These are the emotions which have as their presuppositions some item of knowledge—which must be carefully distinguished from the existence judgments which are presuppositions of value emotions—in other words, knowledge just in the abstract, knowledge as such, or sometimes merely curiosity. In many respects these emotions resemble the others, and although they are on the whole, and from the viewpoint of the general theory of value, of quite secondary importance, yet they have a certain interest attaching to them in view of the fact that they round out our view of the psychology of values. There is one striking respect in which they differ from the typical value emotions, namely, that although the knowledge judgments which are their presuppositions also result in "yes" and "no," yet it is quite a matter of indifference to the subject as to whether the answer is "yes" or "no." Meinong does insist that in a certain sense a positive answer has a little more in the way of (pleasant) feeling overtone than a negative answer, in that there is a certain amount of more positive pleasure

in learning what a thing is rather than in learning what it is not, even from the purely abstract viewpoint of knowledge of things which are quite indifferent to us otherwise. Perhaps this is traceable to a perfectly generalized desire for knowledge-as-such, with an undefined feeling in the background that any actual extension of positive knowledge may ultimately prove valuable. But even so, this is surely a vague shadow of emotion compared to what we experience in the case of a genuine value emotion, when we judge that something in which we are interested really exists or does not exist.

Further, one may say that the object of the pleasure in the knowledge feeling is the knowledge itself; first, it is a pleasure in the ability to pronounce true judgments (inasmuch as truth is always more pleasing than falsehood, on the grounds indicated above), and second, our happiness at this ability even when we are (unwittingly) in error indicates that it is the ability and only indirectly the truth which interests us. Thus these knowledge feelings have as their presupposition a secondary judgment concerning the existence of this knowledge itself (which is of course generally implicit), and therefore one may regard these emotions as a subordinate class under the general class of value emotions, having as their presupposition not some judgment about the existence of a value object, but a judgment about one's own judgments. Meinong does not go so far as Brentano in saying that the pleasures which these knowledge feelings give us constitute them absolute values.

The Value-object

Meinong has now completed his analysis of the process of valuation, and he turns to a study of the object of the valuation process. This is largely a problem in classification (as the first step in any scientific methodology), and the first sub-division is based on whether the value object is physical or psychical. Some values are undoubtedly predominantly the former, but Meinong pays no further attention to them in view of the fact that such objects have been thoroughly studied by the economists. With regard to the psychical value objects, the

question arises as to whether all the psychical pleasures we experience are values. As we have seen above, the idea of pleasure-causation is never essential in the definition of value; what is essential is that the feeling or emotion have as its pre-supposition an existence judgment. Now it is obvious that in the case of pleasurable sensations it is not necessary that we judge them to exist, nor does the pleasure-emotion depend upon such a judgment even when the judgment is present. The sensual feeling is therefore not a value emotion, although this does not exclude the possibility that the sensual feeling may be *accompanied* by a value feeling. For instance to the genuine pleasure of drinking a good wine may be added the value judgment that arises spontaneously when one realizes that not all people are in a position to appreciate this particular vintage. Or when a man has been told by his oculist that he is going blind, every little blur in his vision which heretofore would have passed unnoticed becomes immediately the object of a strong negative value judgment, quite independently of the degree of physical displeasure of the blurred vision.

Having cleared up his position with regard to the place of pleasure in value theory, Meinong continues with the classification of the psychical contents of value judgments as follows: they may be grouped according to whether their principal reference is to (a) self or (b) others. Of the former it may be said that we generally refer to them as phenomena of our own emotional life (for the most part overlooking the purely intellectual value judgments, the cases of appraising) and especially as phenomena of our dispositions. Meinong makes little attempt to analyze the dispositions, and we must wait until we come to the ethical theory of Ehrenfels before we find this analysis carried out adequately; Meinong's attitude is, rather, that one should always judge a disposition strictly with reference to that "to which it disposes one," so that the disposition itself is properly to be regarded as playing merely the rôle of a converging lens, which is not itself the source of illumination or the image. One must not confine his attention to the lens or to the images it projects, but must use them as a guide in

studying the originating source from which the lens collects the rays to form the image; or, to drop the figure, the point of chief interest is the value-emotion itself, which must be judged in terms of the resultant value object, even though we may take note in passing of the dispositions which serve as intermediaries. The concept of disposition is deeply ingrained in our thought, as we can see from the widespread employment of such expressions as Pride, Arrogance, Pretension, Vanity, Self-sufficiency, etc.

With reference to those value objects which refer to others, the first question of importance to be considered is briefly to be designated as the problem of the ego-centric predicament in values, which Meinong calls "the so-called egoistic-problem"; i.e., whether I *can* value the good of another, in view of the oft-made assumption that to value means to increase my pleasure in some way. Meinong's answer is to insist that we actually do attach a meaning to such words as "altruism"; our only possible way out of the difficulty is the way of commonsense, the way of the new empiricism, as we have already seen him follow it in his previous discussion of the epistemological difficulties in value theory. But inasmuch as this question is of primary significance in the discussion of moral values, we may postpone further consideration of it until we take up Meinong's theory of morality.

The classification of the value objects which have reference to others may be effected most conveniently in terms of a fourfold classification of the possible attitudes of the subject to the object which harks back to Brentano, in that two of Brentano's classes are included without alteration and the third is split into two; Meinong makes no attempt to justify this change, but assumes it to be obvious. It is as follows: idea, judgment, feelings, and desires. It was not until a much later publication ("Ueber emotionale Präsentation") that Meinong made any extended use of this classification. In the present work he finds that for the purpose of classifying the value objects which refer to others, the first class is relatively negligible; the other three yield the following types of ("other") value object:

1. Our value judgments of the *judgments* of others concerning ourselves. ("The pleasure of being understood by others.")
2. Our value judgments of the *emotions* of others concerning ourselves, especially in the cases of sympathy and antipathy.
3. Our value judgments of the *desires* of others concerning ourselves; e.g., the desire for the "good will" of others.¹⁷

Meinong exercises considerable ingenuity in devising a symbolism to represent all of these possibilities, into the details of which we need hardly enter here. No one would be inclined to dispute that such a classification of the contents of value judgments is possible, although we must wait until we commence the discussion of moral judgments to appreciate its full significance.

With this we conclude the discussion of those features of Meinong's general value theory to be found in the *Untersuchungen* which are of basic importance, although we shall very shortly see that in some respects his theory was as yet provisional and underwent considerable modification and extension in his later works. Even though Meinong himself regarded the *Untersuchungen* as incomplete and in fact hardly more than a hasty and provisional statement of his position, if we turn to his later writings we shall find that this early work faithfully and almost definitively marks out the direction of these later developments of his thought. In fact, so much so is this the case that we need not take up each of these later works in detail, but shall be able to build on the foundation we have already laid in the study of the *Untersuchungen*.

These later writings were, however, so profoundly influenced by the debate in which Meinong engaged with Ehrenfels concerning the definition of value and the function of the judgment in valuation, that our understanding of them will be greatly facilitated if we postpone discussion of them until after we have seen briefly the points at issue in this

¹⁷. *Ibid.*, pp. 44ff.

debate. Before doing so, however, it would not be fair to refuse to hear Ehrenfels's side of the discussion, and we shall therefore devote the next three chapters to the presentation of his doctrine of desire as fundamental to the concept of values.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Self and Its Desires

V

THE SELF AND ITS DESIRES

MEINONG, as we have seen, was primarily concerned with the description of values as the coincidence of an existence judgment and a positive or negative feeling tone. In his study of the general value theory he confines himself almost exclusively to the abstract description of the value experience. There is, however, another aspect of valuation to which he devotes relatively little attention; namely, the psychological origin and actual functioning of the value process in the life of the individual. These two viewpoints are in a sense opposed although they are by no means mutually exclusive. We have now to turn to Meinong's chief follower, to see how with him began the movement away from the abstract classification of values which we find in the work of Meinong, and towards the other view—of values as being essentially phenomena of the desires and dispositions, practical guides in actual behavior, or even the dominant forces in behavior, whether guides or not. In general we may represent the differences between these two ways of thinking by saying that Meinong is an objectivist, or realist, even to such a point that he finds it necessary in the end to introduce his own theory of epistemological realism in order to support his value theory. Ehrenfels, on the other hand, is primarily a subjectivist, or introspectionist, and is mainly interested in descriptive and genetic psychology. It should be noted that he makes occasional use of Brentano's "inner perception" in order to support the more precarious passages in his theory, but that he goes beyond the psychology of Brentano in that he is interested not in the purely "psychognostic" and descriptive aspect, but is concerned with the psychogenetic and dynamic aspects of psychology, and is seeking causal explanations for the phenomena with which he is concerned rather than mere classifications.

Just as Meinong's final theory of value as we shall see, was the pooling of two streams of his speculation, so we may say that the chief contributions of Ehrenfels to the study of value theory must be regarded as exhibiting on the whole a threefold movement of thought, three trains of reasoning, in some respects deductive and in others inductive, which set out from entirely separate and distinct fields of investigation and deal with relatively independent data. It is only after ten years and more of speculation and writing that it becomes clear that these separate lines of investigation are converging toward the solution of a common problem. These circumstances render the presentation of his theory a little difficult, and it is hoped that, in order to gain a comprehensive view of the whole of Ehrenfels's system of thought, the reader will be willing to forego a strictly chronological presentation of his writings in favor of an attempt to show as well as possible their general argument and significance. This is all the more important if we do not wish to be swept too far from our particular subject of study, the peculiarly Austrian approach to value theory, over into the larger metaphysical questions which lie beyond his thought on values in every direction.

Our general procedure will be, then, as follows: after seeing what were the three chief sources of his thought we shall turn to an analysis of each of them in its effect on his general value theory. For the most part we shall confine our attention for the present to his general theory, and shall postpone to a later chapter his debate with Meinong on the subject of the definition of value and the reality of absolute values; we shall treat his applied theory of value in still other parts of the present study. The three chief sources of his thought may be stated here briefly as follows: (1) His psychological and introspective researches into the nature of desire, which constituted almost his first published work.¹ (2) A second factor to be considered was the influence on him of the work of the Austrian economists, particularly Menger and von Wieser, with whom he was very well acquainted, and whom he mentions at many

1. "Ueber Fühlen und Wollen," 1887.

places in his work. Although, as we shall see, their theory superficially might appear to be subjective or psychological, yet it really consisted in an elaborate hedonic calculus of values on the basis of certain simple postulates as to the nature of the psychological value mechanism—postulates derived from Bernoulli and Bentham. In fact, Ehrenfels seems to look upon himself as the one chosen to furnish the psychological analysis of this strictly rationalistic theory. (3) Finally, Ehrenfels was himself sufficiently under the sway of the *Zeitgeist* to attempt to base much of his value speculation upon the Darwinian theory of Natural Selection,² and at this point he differs from the interpretation put upon Darwin by Nietzsche. The last two of these three factors in his thought naturally exerted a more profound influence upon his theory of values in its practical aspects as applied in ethics and in economics.

Even though we are thus compelled to break radically from a chronological presentation of his writings, it would be well to keep them in mind in their correct order. To this end the reader is referred to the bibliographical conspectus of the works of Meinong and Ehrenfels (Chapter IV), and to the appended Bibliography. At several points of his earlier work Ehrenfels expressed his consciousness of its fragmentary and incomplete character, and he looked upon his *System der Werttheorie* as the definitive statement of his theory. In many cases he quite naturally found one or another of his previous statements of some aspects of his theories adequate and exact, and he therefore reprints such passages essentially *verbatim* in this work. In all cases we shall employ if possible this final statement of his position, although in many cases we shall cite additional references to the earlier passages.

Feelings and Desires

At the commencement of his systematic study he calls attention to various ways of looking at the value concept, such as the more or less popular notion that there is some mysterious "value fluid" which has not yet been distilled in the philoso-

² Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie," i, p. 76.

phers' retorts, in terms of which values are to be defined, metaphysically, at least—a sort of popular “flogiston theory” of values; or the rather artificially limited concepts of the economists who restrict values to the objects which serve to satisfy needs; or finally the more absolutistic theories of a thinker such as Brentano; i.e., that values are contingent upon the worthiness of the object of value as an object of desire. This classification is evidently only a preliminary one, intended merely to indicate Ehrenfels's own purpose to approach the study of values not from any such substantive viewpoint, but from the strictly functional viewpoint of values as being products—not the causes—of desires. It becomes his primary duty, then, to turn his attention to the analysis of desire as a psychological phenomenon.

Ehrenfels begins these strictly psychological studies with an analysis of the relations of feeling and desire in the value situation, as well as a consideration of the other psychological factors which also play a rôle in our value experience. Most people are willing to grant, as a general rule, that desire influences feeling (emotion) or that feeling influences desire in some way or other, although the exact nature of the relationship is not clear. Some go so far as to say that the direction and degree of the desire is fixed exclusively by the feeling-disposition: “I want this or that because it pleases me” would seem to be a very general way of looking at the question.³ But on the other hand there are some people (e.g., Kant) who, although they are willing enough to permit the emotions to play a perhaps dominant rôle in directing most of our desire, insist that it is of absolutely no significance in fixing the worth of the resultant desires, that in fact if the desire, as an “urge,” enters into the situation, this automatically eliminates the possibility of any higher worth or ethical value being assigned to these valuations; that which must dominate the higher valuations is the faculty of the “pure reason.” In order therefore to clear away any misunderstanding as to his own position Ehrenfels first turns to the examination of the position of which Kant is the best known representative.

³. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 6.

In attacking the imposing edifice of the Kantian ethics Ehrenfels realizes that it is very easy to erect such a system upon the basis of personal introspection and inner perception, and that in attacking it when already constructed it would be much easier for him if he were to confine his operations to picking flaws with its logical construction in details, rather than to attack its most fundamental postulates, for when someone has finally been thoroughly convinced of the basic soundness of the Kantian position, it is a thankless task to attempt to reverse his fundamental convictions. Ehrenfels finally admits that his own position—even when phrased in the negative form of the impossibility of our willing without our being “moved” so to do by our feelings—is ultimately to be based only upon the “healthy psychological fantasy” of each person; i.e., upon the inner perception (Brentano). For Ehrenfels, then, the emotions are fundamental to the desires, in a way which we shall investigate shortly, but this must not be understood to mean that values as such are therefore to be defined in terms of feelings.

To have said that all willing and desiring is based on our feelings is not, however, to rule the reason out of our willing life entirely. There are, briefly, two functions for the reason to play in the formation of a desire: it establishes the nature of any pertinent relations between objects around us so as to permit us to select the best means (i.e., the extrinsic values) to any given intrinsic end, and it aids us in constructing in imagination the exact character of the end (the intrinsic value) so that by its very vividness and completeness before our mind’s eye we shall be roused to the highest possible pitch of desire. But these are both clearly subordinate and incidental functions. From the larger decisions of our life-purposes the reason is absolutely barred, according to Ehrenfels’s view; the most compelling chain of reasoning possible as to what we *must* do, even though it be to save our life itself, cannot, would not cause us to “raise a finger” unless we felt so moved, unless life seemed to us to be worth the living.

If the relation between feelings and desires is not to be explained by recourse to the intellect, it becomes necessary to find the relation by an examination of these two alone. There are here three possibilities: either they are both dependent upon some more fundamental phenomenon of our psychological life, the position essentially of Brentano, which Ehrenfels rejected for reasons which we have already examined in Chapter II, or the feelings are dependent upon desire, or *vice versa*.

And just as he assumes Brentano to be the adequate if not sole representative of the first class of his trichotomy, so he accepts Schopenhauer's theory of the Will (or according to the terminology of Ehrenfels, the desire) as fundamental to feeling as a sufficient representative of the second. His answer to Schopenhauer's theory, however, is extremely short, being nothing more than the assertion that from a strictly psychological viewpoint any assumptions as to "unconscious will" are quite incomprehensible. This leaves us then with what we have seen to be his own position, namely that the emotions are fundamental to the desires. He summarizes this position as follows in two general propositions:

1. The origin as well as the strength of the desire will be conditioned solely by the state of feeling which the individual experiences upon the realization of the existence or the non-existence of the to-be-desired object. The influence of the faculty of thought upon the desire is restricted to the calling up of the idea of the desirable object, as well as to the suggesting of the means whereby it may be attained, and the judgment that these means will lead to the object.
2. This conclusion contains no tautology, inasmuch as the inner core of desire is not to be found in the feeling, but rather a desire lies in the realm of the possible, which exhibits no characteristic in common with the simple feeling of pleasure and displeasure. And just as little is the feeling a product of the desire.⁴

It is evident that this theory at first sight evidently contains much in common with the earlier value theory of Meinong. It should be noted in passing, however, that the function assigned to the faculty of thought is much more restricted than

4. *Ibid.*, I, p. 23; cf. "Ueber Fühlen und Wollen," pp. 547ff.

in the theory of Meinong, and further that Ehrenfels does not specify just how the existence or non-existence of the to-be-desired object is known to the desirer. These are questions which were first examined fully in their later writings, as we shall see in Chapter VIII. According to Ehrenfels, then, all we can say as yet is that desire is to be defined genetically as based on emotion, although there is no quality or *tertium quid* common to them both.

Absolute Egoism

In value theory we are not merely interested in the abstract, genetic character of values; our theory concerning them is also largely modified by our views as to the object of the valuation. With regard to the possible theories in this regard, Ehrenfels says:

It could, firstly, be as the result of a general psychical law, that every desire was directed, as its ultimate aim, to one's own pleasure or the freeing of one's self from displeasure; it could, secondly, be that always that would be desired, the idea of which would awaken actual pleasure in the individual himself, and that avoided, the idea of which would awaken displeasure; or thirdly, it could be the emotional *dispositions* which alone or in conjunction with imagined or actual emotions, would determine the desire.⁵

He finds the first of these three possibilities to be the most serious threat against his own theory, and he therefore turns to its consideration immediately. This theory may be designated as absolute psychological egoism, a theory which in one form or another has had an enormous influence on previous value theory and has been a storm center of debate in popular and unscientific as well as learned circles. That many and weighty interests hang upon its acceptance or rejection is obvious. He is therefore moved to devote more time to it than did Meinong, who, as we have seen, simply disregarded it as a case of the ubiquitous ego-centric predicament.

If one attempt to combine the determination of desires by the dispositions with the theory of absolute psychological

⁵. *Ibid.*, I, p. 23.

egoism the judgment plays a very important part, which Ehrenfels brings to attention as follows:

Before all we must in this connection call attention to the fact, that the proposition placed at the conclusion of the previous section, that it is the emotional dispositions of an individual which in the last analysis determine his desires, needs to undergo an important modification if one make the assumption of absolute egoism. For from this it follows that we would necessarily desire that which we *believed* would be the means to the relatively most pleasant emotional state. Our judgment concerning our own emotional dispositions, and not these latter themselves, would be that which directly controlled our desires. Now doubtless in the greater number of cases this judgment will be correct. That such must necessarily be the case, no one who has devoted any adequate study to psychological facts would wish to affirm. It is certainly not uncommon that one deceives himself over his own emotional dispositions; the "Know Thyself" would not otherwise be regarded as so weighty an admonition.⁶

Ehrenfels, recognizing that this hardly furnishes adequate grounds for a refutation of the theory of absolute egoism, inasmuch as at the most this simply introduces the judgment as intermediary in the egoistic value judgment, turns to that which was always Brentano's last resource, the inner experience, and raises directly the question as to whether really one's own feeling of happiness or unhappiness constitutes the goal of every desire. One thing may be agreed upon by all in this respect, that a goal of desire must be held clearly and steadily in the imagination of him who desires; whether this be accepted as a matter of definition or as the result of psychological observation, it furnishes the basis of his further argument in attacking the theory of absolute egoism. The question immediately arises, then, whether when we wish, strive, or will, we imagine our own pleasure or the withdrawal or diminishment of our own pain in every case. Introspection and memory tell us that this is frequently the case, but they are not able to assert for it any universality. The difficulty is that, as a matter of introspective fact, in many cases of eager striving, wishing, or willing, there are present no actual images of ego-centric pleasure or pain. It might be suggested here that

⁶. *Ibid.*, I, p. 24.

the following analogical argument from the physiological field might help to explain this fact: it is known that very often we are totally unconscious of the pressure of the clothing upon our sense of touch, or the pressure of the ground on the soles of our feet, and many objects at the periphery of the field of vision escape our observation until our attention is called to them. Could a similar phenomenon account for the similar result in the case of our desires? Is it possible that the images of future pleasure and pain were present "in consciousness" (potentially) but were "overlooked" in the excitement of the moment? Ehrenfels responds that this is inadmissible, in that one can readily see how one might overlook the relatively insignificant and uninteresting peripheral sensations of sight and touch; but as he has already assumed it as fundamental and to be taken for granted by all that every goal of desire must be held clearly and steadily in the attention of him who desires, this analogical argument falls to the grounds, then, of its own weight. Again, it might be, provided our feelings of our own pleasure and pain *always* escaped our attention and consciousness, that one could indirectly argue them to be thus equally the basis of all desires; but the fact that they are sometimes quite emphatically in the center of attention itself militates against this purely dialectical demonstration of the theory of absolute egoism. We are occasionally conscious of a great internal commotion while we "make up our minds" as to a choice between our own interests and those of another, but there are also many cases where we are not in the least conscious of our own future happiness as modifying or determining our choice, and these are not confined to instances of utter unselfishness, but include many cases of the performance of the routine acts of the daily life, "eating, drinking, walking, sitting, sleeping, etc."

Ehrenfels approaches here very closely to the theory of Hume, to which he calls attention in a foot-note, although he does not go so far or resort to such a conclusive argument as did Hume. Hume, it will be remembered, had scoffed at the idea that self-love could be the most fundamental of all passions,

because behind the self-love there must be still other passions, implanted by nature, which set the goals and measured the success of our pursuit of our own pleasures.

Nature must, by the internal frame and constitution of the mind, give an original propensity to fame, 'ere we can reap any pleasure from that acquisition, or pursue it from motives of self love, and desire of happiness, . . . ⁷

Ehrenfels's argument is very close to this aspect of Hume's position, and even more so in its original formulation, where he says:

. . . David Hume . . . opposed the egoistic standpoint in basing his position on the true state of affairs. And indeed it is not only the ethically commendable desires, to which Hume grants the possibility of being based on other than one's own happiness, but also he brings to attention that even a desire like that for eating or drinking, for fame, power, or revenge, can be based directly on these objects, without it being necessary to imagine one's own pleasure or displeasure. ⁸

There is, nevertheless, here a certain misunderstanding of Hume's famous argument. With Hume it was not a question as to whether one might have strictly non-egocentric desires without having ego-centric desires *at all*; for him it was simply a question of priority. In the first place he has shown, in the passage already quoted, that even in the relatively ego-centric cases these ego-centric desires *must* be preceded by the non-egocentric propensities implanted in us by Nature. And he goes on immediately to suggest that similarly it might be that among these innate propensities one might occasionally find a strictly non-egoistic desire for the good of another. And he demands, rather plaintively, that it is no more than fair to concede that such a view is more humane than to suppose that we are all at heart selfish and ego-centric brutes. As he says:

Who does not see that vengeance, from the force alone of passion, may be so eagerly pursued, as to make us knowingly neglect every consideration of ease, interest, or safety; and like some vindictive animals, infuse our very souls into the wounds we give an enemy; and what a malignant philosophy

⁷ Hume, *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, App. ii. (Open Court edition, p. 144.)

⁸ Ehrenfels, "Ueber Fühlen und Wollen," p. 623.

it must be, that will not allow to humanity and friendship the same privileges which are indisputably granted to the darker passions of enmity and resentment . . .⁹

Thus it is clear that at no point does Hume escape from the ego-centric predicament, nor does he even attempt to do so, but he very carefully distinguishes between this purely dialectical difficulty, and the very genuine problem of the supposed essential selfishness of all human desires. In so far as this distinction is concerned it must be obvious that the essentially meager brief statement of the problem which we find in Meinong cuts more deeply than does that which we find in Ehrenfels, so that it is rather more fair to say that each of these two successors of Hume saw a different aspect of the teaching of the great moralist; which aspect is more fundamental is difficult to say. That which Meinong saw was the purely dialectical difficulty, which he was able to clear away even more thoroughly than did Hume. For Ehrenfels the problem was more in the field of psychology, as always it was for him a question of the *motivation* of human action rather than simply its description. As long as the simple acts of daily life could not, introspectively, be assigned to self-love then there was this much negative evidence that the ego-centric theory must be confined to those cases where it furnishes the obviously correct motivation; it was not universal.

Ehrenfels attempts to establish his opposition to the ego-centric theory by the use of the *reductio ad absurdum*, in showing that if one granted the theory in its extreme form, we are very soon forced to make assertions that one could never grant. Not only are many of our acts of desire (wishing, striving, willing) directed to some non-egocentric goal, but we can be sure that *all* of a certain type of desire-acts are so directed to something other than our own future happiness. The crucial cases which Ehrenfels has in mind are instances of desiring something either in the past or in a future so remote that we cannot possibly anticipate any personal enjoyment from it. (Before entering on these arguments in detail we must note

⁹. Hume, *op. cit.*, pp. 144f.

the grave danger here of overlooking that to which Ehrenfels has already called attention: What I think I desire and what I do desire may differ greatly.) If one wishes that there never had occurred some terrible event in the past such as the Inquisition of Torquemada or witchcraft trials, the absolute egoist must either deny the existence of this wish or relate it in some way to his own future happiness. Thus it would seem that he is driven to the presupposition that he really wishes for a future historical discovery proving that the records of this event which we have hitherto accepted as genuine are either misinterpreted or are forgeries, justifying a refusal to believe longer in these atrocities. Ehrenfels rightly remarks that these are such extreme demands that the assumption of non-egocentric wishes is really by far the less violent assumption to make. Certainly no one can deny that such non-egocentric wishes are possible and actual.

The argument so far has been concerned with instances from the past, but it applies with equal force to wishes directed to the future. Here the assumption to which the absolute egoist is forced is as extreme as in the previous instances; i.e., that if one really desires such a future event, what he (ego-centrally) wishes is that a certain future event which he is convinced will inevitably lead to the still more distant event shall occur within his own life-span. But these preliminary events are not in themselves of any interest to the man wishing. Thus in the instance cited by Cicero of the old man who plants a fruit orchard, the old man (ego-centrally speaking) desires not the fruit on the trees, but to see the young trees properly set out and thriving. The issue, as we have already intimated, is whether or not these preliminary events have themselves anything of value in them. If so, then they are not strictly "wishes for the future," but wishes for the immediate future; i.e., ordinary wishes.

The question then would hinge on the simpler question of fact as to whether one ever has strictly future wishes, and if such be the case, then the absolute egoist must assume the intermediation of these perfectly neutral and valueless pre-

liminary wishes. And here again we cannot assume that the absence of any consciousness of these preliminary wishes in all their complexity is due to any oversight or is to be attributed to "use and wont," in view of the fact that such wishes are relatively rare and are not of such a nature that we should normally become habituated to the making of them; and they would necessarily come to the focus of attention if they were the real goal of our action.

But does this prove that there are also non-egocentric acts of striving and willing? To deny this would be equivalent to the assertion that although we might wish for some non-egocentric goal we were prevented by some mysterious internal power from striving for or willing its realization. This would be a still more absurd hypothesis than that which we have already rejected. Ehrenfels generalizes this situation as follows:

Whenever we wish something, are conscious of the means for attaining our goal, and do not shrink back from the sacrifices which are involved in the effort as the result of some stronger, opposed wish, then the appropriate act of striving or willing takes place as a regular rule. The general validity of this law cannot be doubted. If, however, one grant this, as well as the possibility of strictly selfless wishes, then there follows as a result the possibility of strictly selfless acts of striving and willing.¹⁰

We should note in passing that this constitutes in reality a preliminary formulation of a law of motivation. The more strict statement of this law comes a little later in the course of the same argument. The discussion grows out of the fact, which has often been pointed out, that all of our wishes and other acts of desire tend to result in an improvement of our *immediate* state of happiness. Is it possible for the absolute egoist to conclude from this fact that they are all therefore the products of foresight with this increase of happiness in view? For every actual desire there is accompanying it a train of ideas and sometimes a series of judgments as to relevant facts. If two desires can be distinguished as regards their goals, they can also be distinguished with respect to these trains of ideas and judgments. When one is under the necessity of choosing

¹⁰. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 28.

between two competing desires, and for a long time wavers between them, his final choice will be for that desire by choosing which he increases his state of happiness *at the moment of choosing*.

It must be noted that from this statement it does not necessarily follow that this choice will be of such a nature as to assure the greatest total of happiness in view of the ultimate consequences of the choice. Ehrenfels takes by way of illustration the case of the decision which some hero such as William Tell would have faced if he had been an introspective psychologist and had carefully analyzed all of his mental processes. Under what circumstances can we then presume William Tell to have chosen as he did? Let us imagine him comparing his future fate, languishing in Gessler's prison, but with the knowledge that he has served his country, or living in luxury at the tyrant's court with the knowledge that his country was in slavery. Ehrenfels carries the argument even further: Let us imagine that William Tell can foresee that in the former case the knowledge that he has saved his country will not always be to him the source of satisfaction that it was at the moment of choice, and that the time is sure to come when, from his prison cell, he will curse the day that he sacrificed himself for his ungrateful country; on the other hand let us imagine that he can also foresee that if he betrays his fatherland, the sting and smart of the betrayal will heal over in time, the sweetness of life at the court will lull him into forgetfulness and minimize the qualms of conscience which might at first have caused him to regret his act. Under these circumstances what will he do? Will it be impossible for Tell to do the altruistic act? Ehrenfels argues that, provided the glory and honor of the former course outweighs *for the moment of the decision* the future luxury of the life of the traitor, then he will choose the harder course. Furthermore, in order that he so choose, it is necessary that this momentary preferability of the harder course should be *actualized* in his imagination as vividly as possible. If the ultimate preferability of the treacherous act has asserted itself in his imagination in its full ultimate force, then the heroic act is impossible.

Merely as a theory of the motivation of the acts of martyrs and heroes this statement of Ehrenfels makes no pretension to being an advance. But it is intended primarily, however, to lay the basis for a much more general theory of the psychology of valuation, and these instances are to be regarded as merely the extreme cases of such a general theory. The absolute egoist might be imagined as trying to take advantage of this new theory of motivation and choice—i.e., that a choice is contingent upon the relative state of happiness for the chooser at the moment of choice—to insist that this is evidence that all choices are made with this relative enhancement of happiness in view. Ehrenfels insists, however, that in order for him to show that all choices are made in order to promote one's own happiness, the proponent of absolute egoism must show that always in choosing we "project" all our contemplated future happiness as an actual happiness at this moment of choosing; and he insists rightly that such an assumption would seem to be taken "right out of the air." The new theory of motivation concerns only the moment of choice; the absolute egoist must keep in view the sum total of happiness which the self counts on for the future. Furthermore the fact of the universal accompaniment of acts of striving and will by an increase of happiness is itself an additional difficulty in the path of the absolute egoist, in view of the fact, as already noted, that we do not even always know ourselves what is conducive to our own happiness, and frequently find ourselves mistaken in our preferences. But it would be, as he insists, a "psychological impossibility" to try to imagine a case where a person, by the mere fact of striving, lessened his state of happiness in comparison with what it would have been had he remained inactive. Therefore there is a conflict between these two requirements and it follows that the egoistic motivation of at least those acts in which we are mistaken in our judgment as to what is conducive for our happiness is excluded. And there is a further dialectical difficulty to the theory of absolute egoism, i.e., that the state of happiness which *accompanies* an act of striving cannot be the *effect* of this striving itself; there-

fore the egoist cannot make capital of the fact that every act of striving or willing is accompanied by an increase in the state of happiness.

Fleeting Values

The second of the three possibilities in the trichotomy with which Ehrenfels began this phase of his study was that all desires are directed toward that the bare idea of which occasions my own pleasure or displeasure. This is really a theory that it is my immediate feelings or emotional states which occasion or direct my action, and this theory proves much easier to refute than the theory of absolute egoism. In the first place, we have already noted that there is no necessary connection between emotions and desires; it often happens that one has a feeling without any desire (as in the case cited by Ehrenfels in the course of his debate with Brentano, as to the nature of the relation between the emotions and the desires; see Chapter II), or one finds himself possessed of a desire without any very large or constant feeling accompaniment. Or again the emotional tone which accompanies a given act of striving or willing may change suddenly and fluctuate through wide alternations of intensity or even change sign (i.e., from pleasure to displeasure) without in any way affecting the performance of the act or the desire to perform it, as in the case of the swimmer who at the commencement of his swim may feel very "low in spirits" but who "warms up to it" as the swim progresses; yet throughout the whole swim his desire to keep his head above water or his determination to finish the distance set for himself has not wavered or changed in the slightest.

Having thus shown that the theory of absolute egoism, whether as the theory that all desires are ultimately directed toward ego-centric pleasures, or as a modification of the theory that it is the dispositions which govern desire, is untenable, and now having shown that the same is true of the theory that desire is related strictly to the momentary emotional states, there remains the third possibility: that both the act of desire (wishing, striving, or willing) and the feeling-tone

which accompanies it are the result of the inner dispositions of the man's own psychological make-up, although this must not be regarded as any discovery as to what these desires and emotions are in themselves. Ehrenfels's theory is, then, that we are so constituted that we engage upon any particular striving only in case the state of feelings which the commencement of the striving "brings with itself" upon its entry into consciousness is a happier state than would have been our state if the striving had remained in abeyance or had been directed elsewhere. And this takes place ordinarily without any conscious imagination of the state of feeling involved, and "never, even when it is imagined, merely as a result of this imagination."¹¹

Feeling-dispositions

In order to understand this "law of the relative enhancement of happiness" (*Gesetz der relativen Glücksförderung*) it is necessary to presuppose that the controlling factor for the direction and the strength of the striving and willing lies always in these feeling-dispositions. Stumpf suggested that the relative enhancement of happiness might be traced to the feeling of happiness which often accompanies the mere striving as such; to this Ehrenfels objected that such feelings do not accompany by any means all acts of striving, but only those which seem likely to reach their goal. And furthermore if this were not the case, if it were always true that acts of striving were accompanied by feeling-tones of varying strength, then we should be faced with the problem as to how to explain the cases where the total resultant feeling differed in sign with what we should expect to be the case in view of the behavior of the individual. Perhaps it would be better to quote Ehrenfels's own phraseology of his argument.

Now striving and willing are themselves rather weak sources of emotion, compared with the phenomena of the expectation of the object striven for, the hope of its acquisition, or the fear of its loss. Now if these more potent sources of emotion do not determine the striving, then there must arise

¹¹. *Ibid.*, I, p. 36.

the situation where the pleasure of the specific striving or willing is more than compensated for by the displeasure arising from the other source, so that in sum the striving or willing which is actually present may represent the more unpleasant state of feelings in comparison to the absence of striving or willing. Inasmuch as this never happens, one concludes that acts of striving and willing must be determined by these more potent sources of pleasure.¹²

On this basis therefore he feels justified in repelling the criticism of Stumpf.

It would seem, further, that Ehrenfels has taken sufficient precautions in his presentation of this theory to make it perfectly clear that in his use in this connection of the expression "the relative enhancement of happiness" there is no notion whatever of teleology or of a causal connection between the relative state of happiness accompanying the act of striving or willing and this act itself. The behavior of the individual is contingent upon his feeling dispositions, which are of such a nature that for any given act of striving a definite state of emotions or a change of this state corresponds; the law which Ehrenfels insists upon states that an act of striving or willing is impossible if the state of feelings is lowered as compared to the state of feelings which would accompany another act or no act at all. The clue to the whole matter lies in the fact that this part of the process is not present in consciousness, consequently one cannot speak of the feelings as in any sense *causing* the act. It would seem, however, from the sentence just preceding the last, that there might be some sort of *negative* or *inhibitive* causation; Ehrenfels postpones for the time being the discussion of the genetic side of this problem, hence we can do no more than raise the question at this point. This negative character of the concept of the influence of feelings on striving or willing furnishes us with a means of measuring (in a very approximate sense) the intensity of the striving or willing itself; i.e., the actual feelings of *unhappiness* or *pain* which a person will endure in the performance of the given

¹² Ibid., I, p. 37.

act, and which are not sufficiently severe to dissuade him therefrom. Thus in English we say that "we will go there even if it rains pitchforks."

Ehrenfels concludes his preliminary discussion of desire with a consideration of whether these concepts are applicable also to wishing as a form of desire. To bring this discussion to a focus we may employ his illustration, which is as follows: If one ask a person who wishes for a drink of water whether he would be happier with or without this particular wish, he would doubtless respond that he would be happier in the latter case, having in mind the thought that then his wish would have been satisfied—for it normally would not occur to him that the wish might be absent under any other circumstances. But it is necessary to imagine what the case would be if one compare a thirsty person longing for a drink with a person equally thirsty but who does not wish for a drink. Is the wish itself, just as sheer wish, without any definite reflection as to the possibility of its fulfillment, apt to be accompanied by a happier state than if one were equally needy but were prevented somehow or other from wishing? Of course an additional factor to be excluded from the problem—a factor which Ehrenfels overlooks—is that the wishing itself may be a source of annoyance in that it increases our consciousness of our lack. But we must suppose that the two persons concerned are equally thirsty and equally conscious of the fact; the one who could wish for a refreshing drink would, Ehrenfels asserts, be the happier. One must be careful here not to assign this result to any further reflections which arise as a result of the wishing and lead to the discovery of means for satisfying the want. Nor should one permit himself to compare the state of the person who is resigned and hopeless to that of the one still longing and "hoping against hope"; for here we have to do with two entirely different types of case. The one who is hopeless is one who has so often run into a blind alley seeking his way out of his despair that he has finally abandoned the effort; the other has not as yet reached this stage. To compare these two is therefore patently absurd. Ehrenfels insists that the mere wishing (for the drink) is accompanied by an in-

crease in our happiness and that just as long as this is so then we cannot keep ourselves from forming the wish. Thus wishing, though to a lesser degree, exhibits the same nature as striving and willing. Ehrenfels is now in a position to assert his general law of the relative enhancement of happiness, as follows:

And consequently the affirmed law is perfectly general. It asserts *that all desire acts are conditioned both in their goal and in their strength by the relative enhancement of happiness which they, in view of the feeling-dispositions of the individual concerned, bring with themselves by their entrance into and duration in consciousness.*¹³

Choice is thus the product of deep-seated psychological dispositions which operate almost, as it were, automatically. Any further study of choice and of values must be postponed until we understand the mechanism of desires, of their origin, and especially of their persistence and vitality.

¹³. *Ibid.*, I, p. 41.

CHAPTER SIX

The Persistence of Desire

VI

THE PERSISTENCE OF DESIRE

THE FORMULATION of the law of relative enhancement of happiness which we quoted at the conclusion of the preceding chapter includes certain factors which had not appeared up to that point in Ehrenfels's analysis—especially the reference to the "duration" of a desire in consciousness. In presenting this phase of his theory we must abandon the strict chronological order of his writings, although the statement in the *System* is for the most part adequate. This was the problem which had first attracted the interest of Ehrenfels when he turned to the investigation of the psychology of the will.

There are really three questions which are intimately bound together here: the origin of a desire, the persistence of a desire, and the disappearance of a desire. As far as origin is concerned we are simply thrown back upon chance associations, upon the culture in which we live, upon education and the example of others, and other factors which have as yet escaped analysis. The effective termination of a desire is contingent upon the supervening of other desires or of other psychological phenomena—sickness, sleep, change of environment—which "take our mind off it." Therefore of the three possible questions, that concerning the persistence of a desire is the one most open to psychological analysis.

The Narrowness of Consciousness

The fundamental assumption which Ehrenfels makes, and which he does not question, accepting it as part of his heritage from Brentano, is that a desire is primarily conditioned by the presence in consciousness of the idea of its object. His first problem, therefore, is the determination of the general laws and

conditions affecting the duration of ideas in consciousness—for if there is anything evident about desires it is that they are not fleeting or momentary phenomena, but persist for some time in consciousness. He accepts the customary psychological distinction between peripherally and centrally aroused sensations; and with regard to the former it is only necessary for him briefly to repeat the fundamental tenets of the Weber-Fechner psycho-physical parallelism (that the existence and duration of the sense impression are contingent upon the magnitude and duration of the physical stimulus) in order to indicate where one may look for the conditions governing the duration in consciousness of this type of idea.

The laws governing imaginary ideas are much more complex, and in order to treat of them Ehrenfels introduces what he calls a "fact long recognized in Psychology."¹ This is the assumption that there is some limitation to our powers of entertaining ideas in our consciousness—whether due to fatigue, economy of effort or some other psychological or physiological function—which Ehrenfels follows Brentano in designating as the "narrowness of consciousness." We know that as a matter of fact there is a limitation to the number of sense impressions which our sensory organs can receive and transmit in a given period of time. And in general one can say that the number of internally aroused images possible for a given person in a certain time is more or less inversely proportional to the number of sense impressions received in the same period of time. Thus our imaginations are most active in the dead of night, and if we wish to engage in some thought or train of thoughts involving lively imagination we prefer to withdraw to some secluded spot. On the other hand the total number of centrally aroused images possible would seem to depend directly on the total number of different sense impressions one had accumulated in his previous experience.

So much at least would seem to be possible by way of generalization in a sphere where numerical measurement is difficult. Each such image or idea must be thought of as being

¹. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, pp. 178ff.

the product of certain forces and conditions which tend to bring it to consciousness, although most of these forces are outweighed by still more powerful forces with the result that owing to the "narrowness of consciousness" only a relatively small number of all of the potential images actually come into consciousness; the competition between these different forces—whether thought of as some sort of psychological pulling and hauling or not—resulting in the actualization of only a small number of ideas, may be referred to as the "struggle at the border of consciousness," if one does not carry the figure too far and understand by it some active struggle. (In passing one may make the remark that a good deal of the theory of Ehrenfels would seem to be liable to hypostasization, so that we must continually guard against such an interpretation.)

Ehrenfels's procedure is, first, to investigate the general laws governing the duration of all ideas whatever in consciousness, and then to study the modifying influences of the factors of emotion and judgment in cases where they are present. The first of these tasks is little more than a presentation of the accepted association psychology of his day, and we may therefore content ourselves with a brief statement of his views concerning it. He assumes it as self-evident that every imagination is made up of parts each of which could be traced back to some previous sensation or perception. But we cannot assume "action at a distance" in the psychological sphere, and therefore if these originating experiences of our present idea occurred some days or months previously, it is necessary to assume that their reappearance in consciousness now is due to "unconscious, perhaps purely physical dispositions" which remain in the mind after the sensation or perception has ceased. We must presume that these dispositions are more active and forceful the more vivid and intensive were the original sensations or perceptions, and this accounts for the fact that often we are conscious of imaginary ideas which have no apparent stimulus in our immediate experience. Such imaginary ideas would be the result of the dispositions left as traces in the mind when they were present originally, and they have the tendency to come

back into consciousness—if there is room for them within the narrow limits of consciousness—much as a stick of wood which has been held under water bobs back to the surface upon being released. These dispositions, however, gradually become weaker by the mere passage of time, until finally they lose all power of recalling their idea to consciousness, unless they have the assistance of other ideas related to them by the associative factors of similarity and contemporaneousness. Another factor which also modifies the character of the imaginary idea as it returns is habit. For instance, it is extremely difficult to remember just how a very intimate friend used to look years ago if we have become habituated to his present appearance. And other factors can also be introduced, although they do not demand lengthy analysis, such as the factor of fatigue; e.g., the meaninglessness of a word which is repeated many times over in immediate succession. In all of this analysis Ehrenfels has really done little more than lay what might be called the foundation in general psychology for his own theory of desire.

Emotional Reinforcement

The second general factor which Ehrenfels insists upon as being of importance in governing the duration of an idea in consciousness is the emotions. He does not feel called upon to decide the exact relationship of the emotions to the idea which coexists with them, so he restricts his concept to that of bare accompaniment, although he points out that there may be some sort of causal connection which we have not as yet been able to isolate. What interests him here is that:

If one compare now the course of an idea, in so far as it is accompanied by an emotion, with the course of an idea which plays its rôle without the supplementation of an emotion, one will notice that the latter may be explained with little deviation from the laws of habit and fatigue, whereas in the former case where feelings are also coöperating it is clear that a new power has come into play. And in fact it can be observed here that the more pleasant imaginations or as the case may be the less unpleasant imaginations always last longer than one would expect them to do from the viewpoint of habit and fatigue—that the more pleasant ideas exercise, as it were, an

attraction on our consciousness—or our consciousness an attraction on them, by grace of which they persist longer and more vividly *without any inner act of will to this end* than under otherwise comparable circumstances the indifferent or indeed the unpleasant.²

This may be summarized as an assertion that the more pleasant ideas fall heir to a species of reinforcement in the struggle imposed by the narrowness of consciousness, in which they are in general the winners. It must be noted that this is a purely relative matter, and that there is no absolute notion of pleasure or goodness involved in this concept. The comparison is made between two happiness states which are presumed to be involved in every idea: the happiness state which would exist if the idea were not in consciousness and the happiness state which occurs in conjunction with the idea. It need hardly be pointed out that one could very easily carry this concept to fantastic extremes, and of course if it be regarded from the too strictly analytical viewpoint it is very repugnant to modern notions of psychology. It does not, however, presuppose a more complex psychological mechanism than, e.g., the Freudian censorship. However, it is clear that Ehrenfels has no abstract rationalism as his goal, and that he looks upon his law of the relative enhancement of happiness as a purely dynamic concept, merely indicating in a general way the factors which reinforce certain ideas in their "struggle" to maintain themselves in consciousness. He does not even attempt to adduce instances to establish his law, because he knows that he must ultimately rely upon the inner perceptions of each reader for its final acceptance, and he may as well make his appeal to this court of last resort at once. If one be thus convinced of the correctness of this law, instances of it would be superfluous, and if one be unconvinced then instances drawn from the inner perception of others would not serve to bring conviction. Meinong objected to this summary resort to the inner perceptions and "psychological imagination."³ One is compelled to agree that instances of the working of the law

² Ibid., I, p. 189; cf. "Ueber Fühlen und Wollen," pp. 578f.

³ Meinong, *Ueber Annahmen*, 1st. ed., p. 222, 2nd. ed. p. 297.

would have strengthened the argument for it, but it must be remembered that it is presented in accordance with the canons of Brentano's new empiricism, not as an experimental generalization. Consequently even if instances were offered, they would hardly suffice for ultimate conviction.

It should be noted, however, that this reinforcement of the more pleasant ideas is not to be supposed as occurring in such a way as to enable them to force their way into consciousness; so far as the emergence of the idea is concerned, the laws of association, of habit, and of fatigue govern exclusively. But as soon as a relatively more pleasant idea has emerged into consciousness it will be repressed with relatively greater difficulty. The "more pleasant" idea need not always be a cheerful idea, it may be merely the less unpleasant, and thus it is not fair to this theory to demand that the idea which stays in consciousness shall be a positive feeling of happiness, or even a condition of relatively increasing happiness. The sole question to consider is the difference in the state of happiness between the situation when the idea is present and absent. Let us quote Ehrenfels's description of this theory at some length:

The difference of the feeling states which would be associated with any two chosen ideas . . . and *not positive feelings of any sort or continual increase in happiness* furnishes the reason why the more pleasant idea as compared to the less pleasant always receives an augmentation to the forces coming to it from other sources . . . The magnitude of the reinforcement is not proportional to the height of the feeling state, nor to the magnitude of an eventual increase in happiness, but it is proportional to the difference in feeling states which would be associated with the given ideas. The more the repression of an idea A by an idea B would lower the feeling state . . . the greater the power with which A resists this repression. B can nevertheless win out, if the associative powers which come to its support outweigh markedly those of A; in general however the relative reinforcement of A will also bring about a longer duration of it. What, nevertheless, assures a definite termination of this idea after a certain time is fatigue, which finally brings about the dissipation of even the most blissful fantasies.⁴

Thus this law does not directly bring about the emergence of a relatively pleasant idea into consciousness; but, in view

⁴. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 191.

of the fact that once it has emerged it receives this emotional reinforcement and thus remains longer in consciousness, it accumulates a relatively larger number of associative bonds with other ideas, and thus it has a greater chance of being recalled. It must be remembered that Ehrenfels has already postulated the retention in the mind of "dispositions" which tend to bring back a relatively pleasant idea—like the forces on a submerged stick tending to bring it back to the surface. Thus the emergence and persistence of a relatively more pleasant idea in consciousness would seem to be inevitable.

There are, however, certain phenomena of the inner life which would seem to contradict Ehrenfels's general law, especially the cases of unpleasant ideas which persist in consciousness, apparently through their very unpleasantness, as for instance the persistence of the torments of conscience or remorse. Ehrenfels's answer to this is that these ideas originally started with very vivid or lively sensations or perceptions, and that these factors for the time being over-master the factors of the reinforcement of pleasant ideas. But he argues that these instances can no more with propriety be cited against his theory than could the fact that one can throw a stone into the air be cited as a contradiction of the law of gravitation—an analogy to which Meinong strenuously objects.⁵ Or again, it is a fact of common observation that some people seem to prefer ideas which for most people are of the essence of unpleasantness, to which Ehrenfels replies that these (sometimes morbid) fancies are really for them the more pleasant and that thus they furnish an additional evidence for his general law. To this Meinong replies that even though these thoughts are pleasant for the given individuals, it is certainly possible that other thoughts would be still more pleasant to them, if they could only free themselves from these obsessions. In this reply it would seem that Meinong overlooks one aspect of Ehrenfels's law, namely, that it is not in any sense a voluntary choice—for his suggestion that other ideas might be more pleasant implies a voluntary choice of our ideas in some sense or other.

⁵ Meinong, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

A Physiological Explanation

Ehrenfels feels that his general law would seem more plausible if he were able to suggest a physiological theory of mental action which would offer an explanation of its functioning. To this end he adopts in its larger outlines the physiological psychology of Lehmann—with a perfectly conscious and explicit realization that as yet this can be regarded as nothing more than a sketch, a provisional theory to guide further research. Such a physiological theory must go back to the law of the conservation of energy, and assume as a general rule that no energy can be either created or destroyed within the organism any more than in any other part of the physical world. Each stimulus involves the entry of a certain amount of energy into the organism in the process of stimulation, and each ultimate muscle innervation demands a certain outlay of energy. These two amounts of energy need not in any particular case be equal, in view of the fact that the physiological organism is also a storehouse of reserve energy accumulated from sources other than the incoming stimulation, and places this reserve energy at the disposal of the mental organism. None the less the whole physiological process can be regarded as a sort of piling up and dissipation of energy. According to this view the process of responding to a stimulus is to be regarded as the entry of a certain small amount of energy into a certain portion of the brain, from which it spreads out, reinforced by an outflow of the stored up energy in the brain, over larger and larger areas and paths of the cortex, following the general law that a brain-path once used is more apt and ready to be employed again than a hitherto unused path (and here Ehrenfels could have made good use of the theory of the synapse had it been known to him at the time). So much at least he surmises from the general laws of association psychology.

There is also probably a functional relation between the duration and liveliness of this catabolic process and the amount of the energy in the incoming stimulus, namely such that this process will be relatively more lively and of longer duration if

it takes place in portions of the brain where somehow or other there has been accumulated a surplus of energy to reinforce the original stimulus, and also it will be more lively if the original stimulus is more intense. We may regard the brain (or brain-path) as being somewhere between the two following extremes with respect to its condition: being, at one extreme, as it were, just ready to set its energy in activity upon the slightest additional external stimulus, and at the other extreme being so inert as to set its energy in activity only in so far as it receives energy for this from the incoming stimulus or is able to receive reinforcement from near-by brain-paths. Ehrenfels suggests that one can make the additional assumption that the function which approaches the former condition is what we understand by pleasure and that which approaches the latter is displeasure. This is an advance beyond Lehmann's original theory, so he first quotes Lehmann's theory in some detail with regard to this point, as follows:

Pleasure is the psychic result of the fact that an organ during its functioning consumes no greater amount of energy than the nutrition process can replace; displeasure, on the other hand, is the psychic result of such a maladjustment between consumption and nutrition, regardless of whether this arises when the consumption of energy exceeds the supply, or when the supply, on account of the inactivity of the organ, exceeds the maximum that can be absorbed.⁶

Without criticizing the statement of Lehmann, Ehrenfels suggests that a better statement of the theory would be the following:

Every central organ possesses a particular mean or normal-measure (capable of varying from time to time, certainly) of moderation or repletion with assimilated substance. This represents a supply of potential energy which is lessened by the catabolic process characteristic of the psycho-physical functioning of the organ, but which is increased by the nutrition process. Pleasure obtains when the organ approaches this mean measure in amount from above downwards and perhaps also when this occurs from below upwards by a greater than normal assimilation in a state of under-nutrition. Unhappiness occurs only when the organ departs from its mean measure.⁷

⁶ Ehrenfels, *op. cit.*, I, p. 198. Cf. Lehmann, *Die Hauptgesetze des menschlichen Gefühlslebens*, p. 156.

⁷ Ehrenfels, *op. cit.*, pp. 198f.

We have then two closely related physiological theories of pleasure: that pleasure is the result of such a functioning of the brain as does not absorb more than the normal amount of energy which can be replaced by the nutrition process; and that pleasure is the result of a functioning of the brain such that there is an approach towards the optimum conditions of a certain normal supply of reserve energy. The weakness of the former theory is that it does not specify what period of time is to be considered as normal for the process of nutrition to replace the used-up energy. There are then two concepts which coöperate in the physiological definition of pleasure: the pleasure of an adequate supply of potential energy to carry out any stimulated psychological-physical function, and the pleasure of approaching the optimum condition of energy stored-up in reserve for carrying out these functions. Ehrenfels does not attempt to decide between these two definitions, but it is clear that the former is adequate as a physiological basis for his law of the relative enhancement of pleasure, for if a certain idea did not make demands in the way of energy consumption which the physiological organism could not meet, then it is clear that it could maintain itself in consciousness more readily than an idea which made excessive demands. The latter definition of pleasure not only serves to explain the law of the relative enhancement of pleasure, but might (here Ehrenfels interjects a vigorous "perhaps!") with some exceptions also account for such phenomena as objectless pleasures and displeasures, which, in terms of the theory of the optimum condition of energy surplus, could be explained as (for objectless pleasures) a movement "from below upwards" where the optimum condition is being restored by the quiet functioning of the nutritive and resting processes; objectless displeasures would be, obversely, a movement away from the optimum by a continuance of the nutritive processes beyond the optimum point without any consumption of the more-than-adequate supply of reserve energy.

Whether these theories are to be accepted in detail or not, at least they serve to make clear the concept of the law of the

relative enhancement of happiness, although Ehrenfels brings this discussion to a close by insisting that the validity of this law is not to be made contingent upon acceptance of these physiological speculations.

The Influence of Judgment

We have now seen the influence of one factor—the emotions—upon the reëmergence and duration of ideas in consciousness. It is now necessary to examine the influence of the other factor—the judgment. One fundamental factor which comes into operation here is the reinforcement which an idea receives if we make the judgment that its object is real, or that it really exists. Like Meinong, Ehrenfels raises the question here as to whether there is any difference between the mere imagination of an object and the thought of it as real. Clearly there is such a difference, because if I deliberately imagine an object, I do feel a difficulty in then judging it to be real, just as when I have experienced an object as “real” I find a difficulty in judging it to be fictitious. We may therefore divide all objects into three general classes, defined as follows: (1) the objects adjudged real, i.e., which can in judgment be brought into the causal nexus surrounding the *Ego*, such that either they have affected or will affect the *Ego*, or the *Ego* has affected or will affect them; (2) the objects adjudged unreal, i.e., which are in judgment definitely excluded from the causal nexus surrounding the *Ego*, as just explained; and (3) the purely imaginary objects concerning which no judgment of reality or non-reality is made. Among objects of the first class it is clear that we can make certain other distinctions as to their nearness to us or remoteness from us, and as to the clearness or vagueness with which we can judge as to their reality. These factors also have an effect upon the reinforcement which the respective judgments are able to bring to the idea in its struggle at the margin of consciousness.

In general, Ehrenfels suggests that objects which we judge to be relatively near to us arouse a greater interest than more remote objects, although he concedes parenthetically that mere curiosity—or one might add, antiquarian interest—sometimes

reverses this rule. (Thus many an apparently very old building loses its interest for the tourist when he learns that it is "only" two hundred years old.) As to the three classes of objects listed above, it is obvious that the first class has a great advantage over the others so far as our interest is concerned—although objects of the third class can acquire a vicarious interest by being imaginatively assigned to the first class—as when a person gains interest for an otherwise dull story by insisting that it "really happened."

All of these influences may be summarized under the general law that the more vivid, the more proximate, and the more in agreement with normal experience a given object is judged as being included in the causal nexus surrounding the *Ego*, the greater the reinforcement which this judgment brings to the idea of the object in the competition between ideas. Included in this there are two types of reinforcement to be considered: the reinforcement of the affirmative existence judgment (the "knowledge-emotion" of Meinong) as such, and the reinforcement which comes as a result of the judgment that the object is to be included in the causal nexus immediately surrounding the *Ego*. For the most part these two coincide, in view of the fact that when one judges an object to be real he imagines it as standing in this causal nexus. We may therefore regard that statement of the law which refers solely to the effect of the existence judgment as being inadequate, in view of the fact that this effect appears even where the judgment is replaced by a sufficiently vivid imagination. This does not mean to say that the judgment plays no rôle whatever in fixing the duration or liveliness of an idea in consciousness.

The direct effect of the affirming or denying act of judgment rests rather in the fact that through it this inclusion in or exclusion out of the causal nexus of the subjective reality takes place *without effort*, which, when contrary to the act of judgment (i.e., inclusion when the act of judgment denies, or exclusion when the act of judgment affirms) can take place only as the result of an inner striving or willing.⁸

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, p. 206.

The function of the judgment then is to favor the inclusion of really existing objects in the causal nexus and bring about the exclusion of purely fictitious objects from this nexus, unless the fictitious objects have a sufficiently intense counterbalancing interest in their favor to make possible the necessary act of striving to compensate for the lack of the judgment.

Sometimes the judgment performs its function so suddenly and irresistibly that no act of will or desire can stand against it, and especially is this the case when a long established and highly complex system of accepted ideas is deprived of some fundamental basis by an act of judgment—as when one discovers the hypocrisy of an individual who has hitherto been highly respected by all. Ehrenfels very picturesquely compares the effects of such a judgment to the collapse of a dam when a small fissure permits the escape of a little stream of water. Such a sudden collapse of an elaborate system of thought or well-established conviction, whether of an ultimately pleasant or unpleasant nature, may be so violent that a serious shock or even death results.⁹

The Analysis of Desire

Ehrenfels is now in a position to turn to the analysis of desire. In order to furnish a basis for this analysis he supposes a typical case of conflict of desires, and tries to describe a situation much as a novelist would picture the mental conflict of his hero in some difficult choice. We need hardly quote this illustration in detail, but the succeeding argument will be more intelligible if we summarize briefly the course of the fluctuations of this conflict.¹⁰ A student is pictured as sitting at his writing desk on a hot afternoon, struggling with the effort to master certain portions of the *corpus juris*. His examination is scheduled for the near future, and there remains much material to master. Fatigue slows down his mental processes, and finally brings them to a temporary halt, so that his mind seems to be conscious of nothing but the sounds which rise from the street.

⁹. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 206f; cf. p. 254.

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 214ff.

Suddenly it occurs to him that these sounds have something unaccustomed about them today; the heavy carts are missing, but the street-cars and the pedestrians seem more prominent. Then he realizes that it is Sunday, and that these people are all bent on excursions to the parks and near-by hills. "Up in the hills! How glorious was the excursion three weeks ago to that friendly valley, and from there the climb up the steep rock . . ." So he recalls vividly the events of his previous outing. "Blissful pictures, that, alas, escape all too quickly." His study room seems more dreary than ever. Why not go, then, today? But that will not do; the time allotted for mastering the *corpus* is limited; and railway trips cost money which must be subtracted from the beer and tobacco allowance. "It cannot be."

The student turns despairingly back to his book, but now the real struggle begins; the imaginary pictures of woods and hill-tops march across the page. He becomes restless, his chair seems uncomfortable, his gaze wanders unsteadily about the confining room. He fixates the wall clock; there would yet be time, if he hurried, but no time must be lost in further vacillation.

This thought, and the vivid imagination of what the crowd at the station must be like, of the hurried buying of the ticket, and getting on the train, all call forth an excitement in which the picture of the hill-climbing crowds before the mind with such vividness that all opposing thoughts yield before it. Even before he is properly aware of it, he has seized hat and stick; "his eye, indeed, encounters the outspread *corpus juris*, and evil forebodings rise up. They are quickly repressed, however, with the convincing argument that the refreshment . . . will certainly be for the good of the following days of study." Like a man unchained the student hurries down the stairs . . . whether to the good or the ill of the coming examination being a question not further to be investigated.

Whatever may be the advantages of the new empiricism, its weaknesses were never so apparent as in an instance of this sort, where a whole analysis is made to hinge upon a single imaginary case. Only in case the reader can honestly feel in

his "inner perception" that this case is truly typical, that it represents a perfectly normal development of psychological events, does it merit study. It reminds one of those harrowing mental struggles which sustain the interest of the reader of *Les Misérables*, and has in fact many points in common. One might, perhaps, seek far for a better source of psychological insight than the work of the great novelists; their permanent fame argues that they speak for millions of the inarticulate.

The significant feature of Ehrenfels's theory is apparent in the very beginning of this illustration. The thought of the student turns to the Sunday excursion at first under the stimulus of some chance association (the street noises) and there is no reason why this should occur to him rather than any other association, so far as the theory is concerned. It is only due to the fact that this idea is accompanied in consciousness by a feeling of pleasure which reinforces it that it is able to maintain itself long enough in consciousness to become an object of desire. Ehrenfels admits that this need not always be the case, in that a certain idea might be an object of desire upon its very first appearance in consciousness. But in the illustration cited, which would appear to be a more normal case, it is only after the idea has been repressed from consciousness by the actual reality (the feeling of the necessity of continuing the study of the *corpus juris*) that it is again brought to mind by a new association of ideas (the chance looking at the clock), and this time it returns to consciousness as a desire which gives rise to strivings of a more determinate and "tropistic" character (the seizing of the hat and stick). In short one may say that

. . . only such ideas, with the persistence of which in consciousness a relative enhancement of happiness is bound up can supply desire objects.¹¹

Thus in the case of the student, he was happier as he thought of the possible excursion in the forest than as he turned to his studies. Furthermore it is clear from this illustration that the desire object must be definitely imagined as being included in the causal nexus surrounding the *Ego*, in such a way, that

¹¹. *Ibid.*, I, p. 217.

is, that "positive" desire objects will be imagined as being included in the subjective reality, and "negative" desire objects—objects of detestation—will be imagined as being excluded from this reality.

This may be summarized as the universal proposition that all desires are cases of the inclusion in or the exclusion out of the subjective reality of ideas which are accompanied by a relative enhancement of happiness. Is this statement adequate to define the concept "desire"? In order that a universal affirmative proposition be a definition it is necessary that it be capable of conversion into a universal affirmative. Ehrenfels applies this test at once.

To this one may forthwith add a further induction, which is also of great significance for what follows. The above-stated conclusion can also be converted: in all cases where the inclusion or the exclusion of an object in or out of the subjective reality brings with itself a relative enhancement of happiness, there is also present a—positive or negative—desire. A case in which this coincidence does not hold cannot under any circumstances be discovered empirically.¹²

In other words not only is this relative furtherance or enhancement of happiness the necessary condition of desire; it is the sufficient and hence the defining condition. (See *Plate I*.)

It was this theory of desire—showing as it does such a close resemblance to the theory of ideo-motor action, although generalized to apply to all action—which bore the brunt of the criticism directed against the theory of value of Ehrenfels. It is at once evident that it runs directly counter to any free-will theory of value and would thus render the traditional theological conceptions of ethics nugatory; it is not surprising therefore that Cathrein should criticize Ehrenfels as severely as possible.¹³ Schwarz also attacked it on the ground that it abolished the concept of will.¹⁴ Ehrenfels's reply¹⁵ to this criticism is of especial importance in its clear formulation of his

¹² *Ibid.*, I, p. 219.

¹³ Cathrein, "System der Werttheorie"; *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, XII, pp. 441-451; cf. Ehrenfels, "Erwiderung", *ibid.*, XIII, pp. 60-66.

¹⁴ Schwarz, "Die empiristische Willenspsychologie und das Gesetz von der relativen Glücksförderung"; *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, XXIII, pp. 205-234.

¹⁵ Ehrenfels, "Entgegnung auf Schwarz' Kritik"; *ibid.*, XXIII, pp. 261-284.

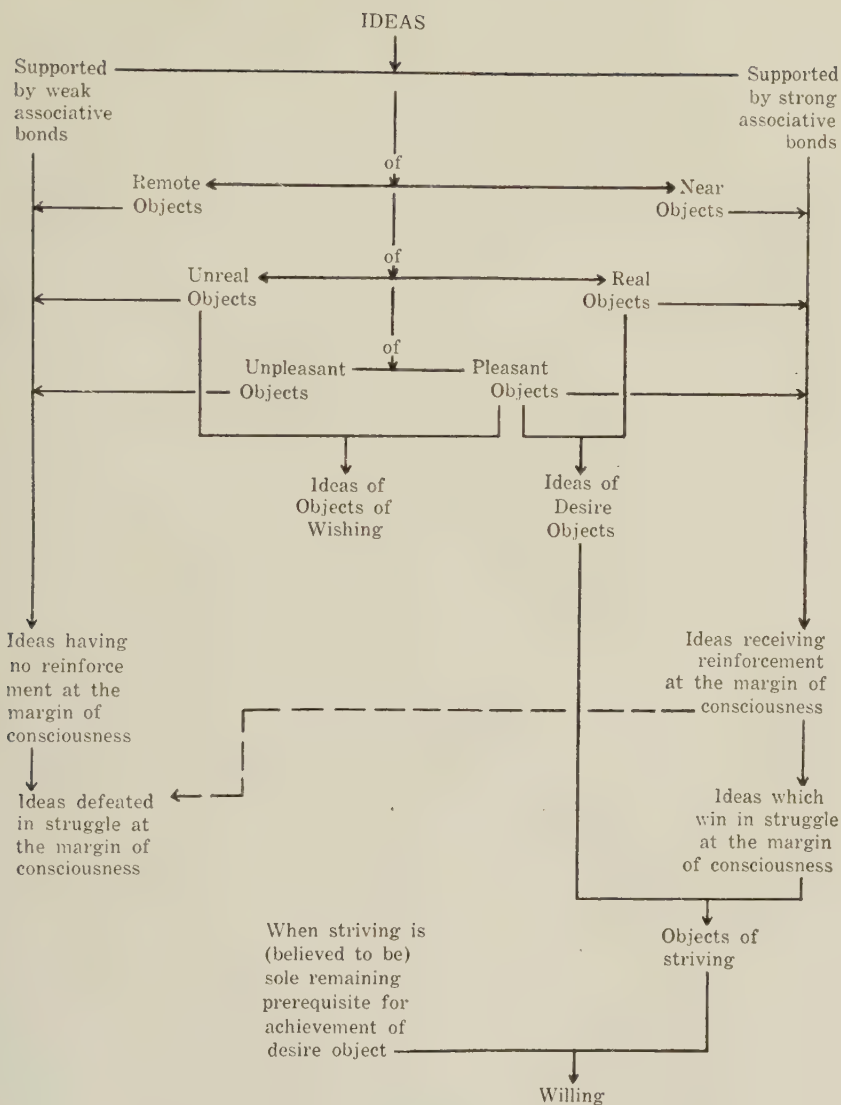


PLATE I

whole theory, into the details of which we cannot enter here, although we will be able to clear up the concept of the relative enhancement of happiness very materially if we note the analogical argument which he here develops.¹⁶ Let one imagine a mountainous upland, with many little streams of water tumbling down to lower levels, following paths which, if one possessed a complete survey of the whole topography and all the other relevant data, could be accurately predicted. The actual variations in velocity and direction of each drop of water at every moment of fall are to be determined by (1) its momentum, (2) the force of gravitation at the point, and (3) the slope of the stream bed at the point. The analogy is to be interpreted as follows: The stream of water is the psychophysical process of stimulation and response, regardless of whether it be thought of in monistic or dualistic terms. The momentum of the water drop represents the associative tendencies of our ideas (again recalling the previous analogy of the stick submerged under water). The terrain represents the psychic dispositions which we have seen to be presupposed in every value judgment. Ehrenfels even extends the analogy to other aspects of the situation: Thus the gradual or quick falling of the water represents the continual bettering of the state of happiness which accompanies each psychic phenomenon, a comparison which recalls his assertion that the mind always entertains the more pleasant idea—under the general law of the relative enhancement of happiness—just as naturally as water seeks the lowest level.¹⁷ Additional steps in the analogy are that the relative altitude of two neighboring parts of the terrain represents the relative furtherance of happiness to be expected if the stream of consciousness were to flow from one point to the other, and finally the law of gravitation represents the universal tendency of an idea which is accompanied by a relative enhancement of happiness to maintain itself in consciousness.

There are several factors which thus combine to produce a desire, and it is evident from this analogy that it would be

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 264f.

¹⁷ Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," i, p. 93.

difficult to secure an adequate measure of some of them, if not indeed of all of them. The easiest of all to measure is the total effect of the associative bonds active or involved in a given situation, although actually such a measurement is far beyond the most ambitious hopes of present laboratory technique. Nevertheless we may hope ultimately to have fairly adequate relative measures of the functioning of the chief associations in normal life—indeed the application of psychology to advertising is an exploitation of such of these general laws as have as yet been isolated even imperfectly. The tendency of an idea which is accompanied by a relative enhancement of happiness to maintain itself in consciousness is extremely difficult to measure; since, however, the theory would appear to make the assumption that this force—to be compared to the force of gravitation in the analogy—is fairly constant, we may for the time being cancel it out of the discussion. The third factor, that of the difference between the state of happiness which accompanies an idea and the state of happiness which would obtain if the idea were not in consciousness, is not subject to direct measurement at all, nor will it be until we are in a position to achieve Bentham's ideal of a measurement of a unit of happiness itself, even when that happiness is purely potential. Nevertheless one can, as Ehrenfels has previously pointed out, arrive at an indirect measure of this factor in the case where one desire is superseded in its functioning through the entry of a more powerful desire; this, however, can be used as a measure only in those cases, known to the economists under the term of "marginal cases," where the superseding idea is just strong enough to over-balance the competing idea. There is no actual psychic intensity of emotion or of tension which can be used as a direct measure of desire.

Meinong's Criticisms

Meinong objected¹⁸ to this indirect and relative nature of Ehrenfels's law of desire, on the ground that it appeared to be an attempt to remove the discussion entirely from the realm

¹⁸. Meinong, *Ueber Annahmen*, pp. 299ff.

of empirical investigation. Thus if desires were to be related directly to positive states of happiness, then one might feel more confidence in the possibility of an ultimate measurement of them, however vague and approximate. But to make desire a function of an utterly incommensurable relative difference between an actual and a potential state of happiness is to make it impossible to dispute with Ehrenfels as to the nature of desire. This does not mean therefore that Ehrenfels is right—as Meinong says—any more than it would be possible for one to insist upon the rightness of a certain theory of color-blindness on the ground that a blind person would have no counter-evidence to offer. But Meinong's objections also call into question still other factors; thus even though it be that there are some cases which offer empirical evidence for the law of the relative enhancement of happiness, there are other cases which would seem to contradict the law—cases in which I desire without experiencing any state of happiness accompanying my desire, or even where I desire and at the same time am unhappy. Meinong here patently overlooks the fact that Ehrenfels has said that such a situation does not in any sense contradict his law, because all that he insists upon is not that the state of emotion accompanying the desire shall be a state of happiness, but merely that the act of desire shall be accompanied by a relatively more happy state than if the desire had not occurred. The source of Meinong's misunderstanding of this point is not far to seek. He interprets Ehrenfels's theory as being a theory which finds the *cause* of the desire in the relative increase in happiness which comes to the individual as a result of his hope to achieve the object of his desire. Thus he admits that he can think of cases of desire yielding an absolute enhancement of happiness; i.e., cases where the desire is accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction—for the most part such that one looks upon the desire itself as the first step towards the realization of its own object. And thus, in line with this interpretation of Ehrenfels's theory, he finds on the contrary cases where one desires—or wills—a forlorn hope, or engages upon a desperate enterprise which can promise no return, and he suggests that one can hardly look upon such a

person as happier than he who resigns himself to the inevitable. But if one recalls that Ehrenfels has insisted throughout his study that the actual desires we have are not the product of a teleological calculation of future consequences of the desire and the acts of will, but are simply the inevitable outcome from each momentary existing state of mind and governed largely by the ideas which manage to persist in consciousness, then it will be seen that Meinong is really attacking a theory which can hardly be assigned to Ehrenfels.

In bringing the discussion of Meinong's criticism of this theory to a close we must mention his attitude toward this psychological basis of desire—the struggle of an idea to maintain itself in consciousness. Early in his chapter he had called attention to another theory—that of Saxinger—that it was not those ideas necessarily which were accompanied by a relative enhancement of happiness which received a reinforcement in their struggle to survive in consciousness but rather those ideas which were accompanied by a relatively more intense emotional state, whether of happiness or unhappiness, which were thus reinforced. Meinong reserves his final judgment on this theory, but says frankly that at the time it seemed to him to be a theory preferable to the theory of Ehrenfels. When, however, it comes to the motivation of desires, it seems to him to be an inadequate description of the facts to say that one desire wins out over another by leading us to forget the other—or to believe that one has “conquered a temptation” by “putting it out of mind,” when he would yield to it again if he chanced to think of it. Ehrenfels, however, certainly allowed ample room in his theory for the struggle of motives—as we have seen for instance in his illustration of the student debating whether he is to continue his studies or take a trip to the hills. Ehrenfels does not insist that the “temptation” must never come to mind in order that we “conquer” it, but that whenever it does come to mind it shall be counterbalanced by other ideas which bring with themselves still more pleasant associations and emotions.

Meinong has still other objections to the theories of Ehrenfels, but we must postpone examination of them until we can

do so to better advantage in the next chapter. It is to be hoped that the criticisms we have already cited have served to clarify some possible and actual misunderstandings of Ehrenfels's theory and also have served to show some of its limitations. In general one may agree with Meinong's criticism that Ehrenfels's theory is exceedingly abstract and hypothetical, that it does not lend itself to empirical or quantitative measurement or verification and that there are many other types of behavior which the theory does not explain adequately.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Desire and Motive

VII

DESIRE AND MOTIVE

WISHING, striving, and willing are all to be classed, in the theory of Ehrenfels, under the general head of desiring. The difference between wishing and the others is that it can be directed toward anything whose existence or non-existence can be imagined; but even wishing cannot be directed toward the existence of something which is known to exist, or the non-existence of something which with equal certainty is known to be impossible.

I cannot wish my own existence as long as I accept it as given with complete certainty . . . Also I cannot wish the non-existence of a round square, as long as I recognize its impossibility.¹

Meinong agreed perfectly with this distinction.

If a wish occurs in the mind persistently enough and accompanied by a sufficiently intense relative enhancement of happiness, then it will almost inevitably lead to some sort of overt behavior, as we have seen in the illustration cited in the preceding chapter. This general restlessness, more or less "pointed" and tropistic with respect to the object of the wish, is what he calls striving. It should be noted that not all restless activity is "striving" according to this technical definition. If in the course of his striving the individual can form the judgment that his own striving is the *sole* additional prerequisite to the inclusion or exclusion of the object in or out of the causal nexus surrounding the *Ego*, then this striving, accompanied by this judgment, is to be designated as "will." The close similarity between the theory of Ehrenfels and the earlier theory of Brentano with regard to this definition of the will is striking (cf. Chapter Two).

¹. Ehrenfels, "Ueber Fühlen und Wollen," p. 591.

In order to draw a complete division between striving and will (especially in those cases where the striving is itself increasing the probabilities of the accomplishment of the goal in view) Ehrenfels suggests the resort to the law of probabilities in such a way that when the probability that the judgment above referred to is right exceeds fifty per cent of certainty, we may employ the designation will. This would be the minimal case of willing. For this would be the case of lowest probability of success which would exclude the possibility of willing two mutually exclusive or incompatible objects at the same time or under given conditions; as, for instance, willing to be in two different places at the same time, although one can and sometimes does wish for such a combination and may even engage in (blind) activities which can only be interpreted as strivings for their joint realization.

It would seem that in thus seeking for an objective distinction between striving and willing Ehrenfels is less successful than was Brentano, who realized that the psychological process basic to willing is preference. Brentano does not, however, try to distinguish between striving and willing—in fact he was trying to maintain that unity of his class of the phenomena of love and hate which Ehrenfels strove so persistently to destroy. One can, however, draw the line between striving and willing without resort to the uncertainties of the probabilities of the external world, if we insert into Ehrenfels's definition of will the requirement that the striver forms the judgment "whether erroneously or not" that his striving is the sole remaining prerequisite to success. One could be sure that no one would form the judgment that he could be in two places at the same time; but one would not have to wait until the goal was in sight to characterize a series of acts as "willing." According to Ehrenfels's definition as unmodified there would have been no will involved in Colonel Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic until he circled above Le Bourget (!)

It is not necessary that striving should always be intercalated between wishing and willing, although this is the

normal arrangement; most people find that they must "get their hand in" and must "warm up" to a given undertaking before they really will to perform it. From the analytical viewpoint striving can be regarded as lying between wishing and willing: including the former within itself, and included along with wishing in the latter.

Terminology

In order to understand the way in which this theory of will functions in the general theory of value, it is necessary to be clear about terminology, and we therefore will summarize here briefly Ehrenfels's terminology and usage in this field.

That value is strictly contingent upon desire is, of course, fundamental to the thought of Ehrenfels. The first variation in usage of the concepts of general value arises through the fact that although values are to be understood ultimately only as the relation of a particular subject to a particular object in a special type of relation and at a given time, yet certain types of object seem to possess such a uniform capacity for evoking this value attitude on the part of all normal subjects that they seem endowed with certain properties capable of abstraction from their being as mere objects; and we may therefore refer to the *normal* value as being the value an object of such and such qualities possesses for the normal person. In many cases also it is possible to distinguish between the actual value which an object possesses as desire-object and the value which we or someone adequately informed with regard to it is certain we shall assign to this object under other circumstances; thus I may enjoy cold baths, although as a matter of fact a doctor may be in a position to warn me that they injure my health, and thus lead me to dislike them. This advice would constitute a *normative* value, which differs from the normal value in that, although based on a normal value, its chief function is to admonish or to control behavior. Or again one may classify the normal values of particular types or classes of subject, such as the values of youth, of old age, of men, of women, in distinction to *individual* values, as the *social* values. Every society has

certain values which are enforced by special sanctions, and we may designate the whole class of such values as the *imperative* values; we shall have occasion to note later that Ehrenfels subdivides this class into the *jural*, *customary*, *moral*, and *ethical* values. It should be observed that these imperative values are not always actual values, but frequently represent merely *desiderata*, or programs of social activity as yet unrealized. Finally, in cases where the judgment is an essential factor in the value-situation, we may have, owing to error in this judgment, a distinction between *imaginary* and *real* values. This last is a distinction which we shall consider at greater length in a later chapter.

Ehrenfels also makes certain terminological distinctions between the words *werten*, *werthalten*, *Wertung*, *bewerten*, *wertgeben*, *wertschätzen*, and *Werturteil*.² The first two are transitive verbs meaning to be conscious of values in the object; *Wertung* is the substantive for this consciousness of value. *Bewerten* in his terminology is the purely intellectual operation of the estimation of value, and *wertgeben* is to assign the value thus recognized to the object. The distinction between these two groups of words is analogous to that to which Professor John Dewey draws attention in contrasting "prize" and "appraise," or "esteem" and "estimate," as we have already seen (Chapter IV). *Wertschätzen* is an ambiguous word, meaning either *werten* (positively) or *bewerten*; it should therefore be employed only with caution, and as a matter of fact Ehrenfels rarely employs it.

Having now examined the classification of the possible approaches to the general theory of value and the variations and derivatives of the general concepts, we may turn to the classification of values as such. The first fairly obvious classification is that between mediate and immediate values. By this Ehrenfels means that a mediate value is a value at all only if I can make the judgment that it will in some way lead to an immediate value; an immediate value is one, on the other hand, which requires no judgmental process to assist it in establishing

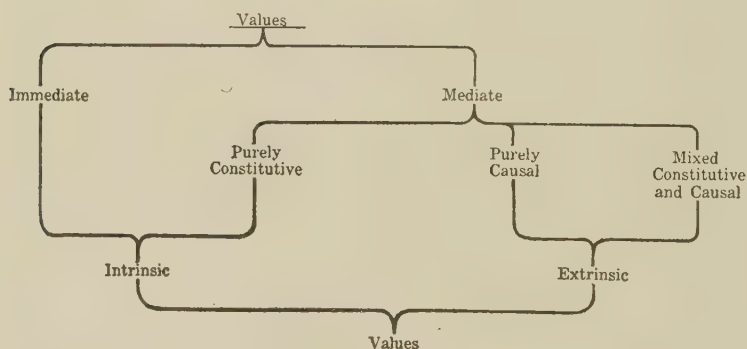
2. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, pp. 70f.

itself as a value in my consciousness as an object of desire. There are two possible types of judgment of this sort which mediate between immediate and mediate values: the causal judgment and the "constitutive." The former is such almost self-evidently. The latter, however, is a judgment which constitutes an object a value because this object has once included, is now including within it, or will in the future include as one of its parts or portions some immediate value object; or in some such more or less "participative" way it "contains" the object of desire. Thus iron ore is a constitutive value because of the metal contained in it. Ehrenfels warns us against the inversion of this terminology, so as to understand by constitutive values the valuation of the part because of the whole, or because of another part. Thus a fragment of the true Cross or a chip from the pedestal of a great statue is not in this sense a constitutive value but is rather merely an aid to the memory or the association process in recalling to mind the whole of which it was a part, or increasing the vividness with which we imagine the whole of which we have this fragment before us. The basis of this distinction is that in the case of the constitutive value of the whole because of its part there is a judgment which mediates the value transfer, whereas in the latter case there is no such judgment but merely an associative process. It would seem that this is rather a narrow restriction, in view of the fact that one may also mediate the value of a part of an organism through the judgment that it is a "vital part" of the whole. Thus any member in an organic whole or any unit in a closely interrelated system would seem to draw its value solely or principally as being this member or unit. This sort of value is of course closely related to the value of what the Austrian economists refer to as complementary goods;³ thus many chemical elements are relatively low in value until they are combined with others in the "constitutive" formation of some alloy or compound of value—and certainly the value which thus comes to be attributed to these elements is mediated by a judgment which is far more "constitutive" than "causal" in its nature—

3. Cf. Menger, *Grundsätze der Volkswirtschaftslehre*, (1923) pp. 21f.

if one insist on making this distinction at all. It might be a difficult question to answer as to just in how far any cause is "constitutive" of its effect.

With these modifications and provisions we may readily accept Ehrenfels's terminology for the rest, in view of the fact that he calls such judgments both constitutive and causal. The strictly constitutive values are very close to the immediate values in character, owing to the extreme difficulty with which we separate the part from the whole in our thought. Presumably most people would find any such distinction completely foreign to their thought, and since usage is the test of Ehrenfels's "empirical method," we may combine these two values together into one class of "intrinsic" values, and combine the "causal" and the "mixed causal and constitutive" values together as "extrinsic" values. This whole relation he diagrams as follows:⁴



The classification of greatest importance for our purposes here is that between extrinsic and intrinsic values.

Means and Ends

We are now in a position to employ this classification in the further investigation of desire as the basis of values. In §71 of his *System* Ehrenfels considers two types of desire which follow closely the classification just considered; namely, desires

⁴ Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 77.

which desire their object for itself and those which desire their object for the sake of something else—thus giving rise to immediate and mediate values. The usage of daily speech has long recognized the distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic values, although it has overlooked the question of constitutive values entirely and confined its attention to the causal judgment, employing the terms “means” and “ends” to express this distinction. Although at first glance it would seem that this distinction which applies to the objects of desire would also apply to desires themselves, a brief reflection will show that this is not the case, and that there is no desire for the means which is not also *ipso facto* a desire for the end of the action as well, albeit there is always the possibility of the desire for the end alone without desiring the means. It frequently happens that in the course of a long and complicated operation we lose sight of the end for the time being, although we continue our striving towards it; this however must not be allowed to lead us to suppose that the desire or striving is only a striving for the means. In the first place we must avoid confusion between the “inner” and the “outer” striving; thus when we set out to walk somewhere we “make up our mind” just once to go there, although it is necessary to perform hundreds of physical movements to accomplish our end. And second, we must avoid confusion between the aim or end of our striving and the ultimate result of it; it will be necessary to examine the relations between these concepts of means, end, and ultimate result in some detail in Chapter XIII, and we may therefore content ourselves here with the remark that “purpose” (*Absicht*) may be defined either with reference to the end alone, or with reference to the end plus the means employed.

If one objects to the above treatment of means and ends on the grounds that Ehrenfels has not included a consideration of “objectless strivings” and “aimless wanderings” and similar phenomena, one could readily answer for him that these phenomena come most precisely under his general definition of all striving as being the overt bodily expression—whether random or not—which comes as the result of the persistence

of an idea in consciousness which is accompanied by a relative enhancement of happiness. There is nothing in this theory to prevent this idea being so vague that it would be difficult to formulate it or isolate it in consciousness, and yet such a diffuse feeling of contentment or restlessness might actually be relatively the most happy state of mind of which the individual was capable at the moment and under the circumstances.⁵

If, then, we may generalize all desires as being either for ends or for the means to ends, it is necessary to note that many ideas of ends alone, even though they be ends the idea of which is accompanied in consciousness by a notable relative enhancement of happiness, might speedily fade again from consciousness owing to the associative claims of other stimuli in the immediate environment. It is notoriously difficult for many people to "day-dream" for very long periods of time, and some people find it altogether repugnant. Ehrenfels recalls to our attention the instance of the student at his desk. The idea of the mountain picnic appealed very strongly to him, but nevertheless the stimuli of his immediate task forced this idea from his mind; it was only when he (more or less accidentally) combined the idea of the end with the idea of the means to the end, by glancing at the clock and noting that he had just time to catch the right train, that the relative enhancement of happiness occasioned by these two ideas as combined exceeded the relative enhancement of happiness occasioned by the idea of completing his studies, and his quick decision followed. Ehrenfels does not insist that this is always the case but suggests it as a probable description of most instances of decision.

If the idea of means thus plays a part in helping the idea of the end to maintain itself in consciousness it is well to understand in general terms how this takes place. There are three general cases possible: (1) The idea of the means is such that its appearance in consciousness is accompanied by pleasure—as when we feel like taking a stroll and at the same time would like to walk somewhere within easy walking distance for some other purpose; it is clear that in this case the mere

⁵. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 257f.

pleasure of the stroll will so reinforce the desire to go to the specific place we had in mind that it will prove to be easier to do than if the idea of the end alone furnished the stimulation to the striving. (2) The idea of the means may be relatively indifferent to us, so that it will be held in consciousness only if the idea of the end reinforces it. (3) Finally, the idea of the means may be relatively unpleasant, in which case we have a conflict of motives of the simplest type. This last situation recalls the fact that the ultimate measure of the strength of a desire is just such a conflict of motives in which we can form an estimate of some sort as to the "cost," i.e., the unpleasantness of the idea of the means, in spite of which the idea of the end maintains itself so firmly in consciousness as to lead to striving and ultimately to willing.

A more exact case of conflict of motives is one in which the idea of the means to the end involves both a relative enhancement of happiness and also a relative diminishment of happiness; in order to avoid the appearance of sheer self-contradiction here it is necessary to explain that Ehrenfels has in mind rather the complex sort of case in which the end involves a whole series of means, some of which bring relative happiness, others relative unhappiness. In the instance of the student buying the railroad ticket for his picnic, the idea of this is such as to bring a feeling of relative diminishment of happiness with it. On the other hand the thought of the climb up the hills through the pine forest as means to the end of reaching the top is in itself such an idea as to occasion a relative enhancement of happiness. Thus the final behavior depends upon whether the complex idea of the excursion can maintain itself in consciousness so as to lead to the requisite striving and willing.

It must not be concluded from this that Ehrenfels entertains the concept that an idea accompanied by a feeling of relative diminishment of happiness has a tendency to leave consciousness; he has nowhere discussed the laws governing the repression of ideas from consciousness, and we are left to infer that this occurs only through the relative superiority in general associative power of the other ideas which are competing with

it. An idea of the means which was accompanied by a feeling of relative diminishment of happiness would simply serve to weaken the relative enhancement of happiness of the idea of the end, until it might be that the laws of association and attention brought some other idea to consciousness which would exclude this—thus leading to inaction, forgetfulness, and ultimate failure to perform the act at all.

There is another concept closely related to this analysis which Ehrenfels discusses in two different places.⁶ This is the fact that it frequently happens that when one recalls in retrospect experiences such as we have been describing he sometimes finds a wish in his mind that the result had been other than it was; we may disregard whether or not this is due to the fact that certain effects of the decision as it actually eventuated in action were not foreseen. Such a case of unpleasant retrospect is called regret, or in its more extreme form remorse. It is this feeling of remorse which furnishes the occasion of valuation, for we feel that the remorse is an indication that we had not adequately evaluated all our desires and all of the possible results of our decision at the time of the action, and in order to avoid similar remorse in the future we engage upon elaborate attempts to decide in advance upon some more systematic basis than the chance momentary feelings, values among which we expect in the future to be called upon to choose. Actually, of course, it is the unexpected ill results of our act which occasion this desire to avoid such bad results the next time, but this desire expresses itself in the form of remorse. We must reserve until later the question as to whether the values so developed have any objective or final validity.

It must further be noted that there are cases of activity which cannot be traced back to this mechanism of valuation. For instance, in cases of hypnotism we have behavior which apparently is to be traced to the wishes of the hypnotist, and also in habitual actions we frequently do things which we would not do were it not for the previous existence of the habit. These and other similar cases may, however, be dis-

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, p. 72, and I, p. 236.

regarded as being adequately explained by the psychological laws which govern them. Somewhat more closely related to the theory of desire are cases where we "make up our minds" in advance that if we are ever in such and such circumstances we will do thus and so. If this resolution is formed with sufficient vividness and "determination" it is possible that it may actually furnish a sort of habitual predisposition to perform the act contemplated. For our purposes it is sufficient to note that the determination itself would be formed only if its idea in consciousness conforms to the same constellation of controlling factors that we have seen to be prerequisite for the maintenance of the idea of an immediate act in consciousness.

The "Faculty" of Desire

Ehrenfels now asks whether it is possible to look upon desire as being one of the faculties of the soul in the sense in which Bain used the expression, as coördinate with intellect and sensibilities, or with the idea and judgment of Brentano's theory. Nothing which he has so far said in his theoretical discussion would absolutely contradict some such theory. There are however three difficulties in the way of such an assumption, which we may mention briefly.

(1) We have seen that in the case of the mediate desires, we must presuppose a judgment of a causal or constitutive character as prerequisite to the formation of the desire; this would seem to involve the supposed faculty of desire in some sort of subordination to a faculty of judgment, whereas in the case of immediate desire no such subordination is presupposed or even admissible. There would therefore have to be two sorts of elementary desires. Ehrenfels refers to this as a difficulty in the way of a theory of a separate faculty of desire. Meinong objects on the ground that the fact that judgment must mediate our values is "not a difficulty" but is simply a matter of fact.⁷ To just what extent the judgment is the essential means of

⁷. Meinong, *Ueber Annahmen*, p. 294 (1910).

mediation in every valuation in the theories of Meinong and Ehrenfels raises questions which are much more profound than the question of a separate faculty of desire.

(2) We have already noted several times that the intensity of a desire is not to be measured by reference to any direct psychic phenomenon according to Ehrenfels, but by a comparison between an actual and a possible state of happiness—the *relative* enhancement of happiness contingent upon the maintenance of the idea of the object of desire as against the state of happiness contingent upon its being lost from consciousness—and furthermore that this measure is possible at all only in cases of a conflict of motives: the marginal case of the economists. It would seem that a faculty of the mind whose intensity of functioning was to be determined by such a complex process is far from being a simple psychic element.

(3) Finally, we have seen that all the phenomena of desiring can be adequately explained by reference to the ordinary psychological laws for the entrance and duration of ideas in consciousness. Now it may be that in some cases we do feel that there is something at work over and above these laws of association and reinforcement. But certainly no one has isolated or analyzed this something sufficiently for it to receive universal recognition. And it would seem to be merely an *ad hoc* hypothesis without necessity for its existence—to be shaved off by Occam's razor. For instance, when we hear a band playing a march we find our feet keeping time to the music. It is possible of course to imagine that this movement of our feet is the result of the functioning of this (in this case unconscious) desire, but the psychologist would have no difficulty in accounting for the phenomenon in terms of the laws of association, habit, and ideo-motor action. And certainly when I desire something, I am conscious of intensive imagination and feeling and possibly of strivings and judgments, but never of any psychic phenomenon which might be described as any such fundamental, elemental "faculty of desire." Ehrenfels then summarizes his argument, and in so doing repeats in its final form his definition of desire:

And these introspections—together with the above discussed difficulties—lead me to the assertion: *there is no special fundamental psychical element "desire" (wishing, striving, or willing). What we call desire is nothing else than the idea—which supplies the basis of a relative enhancement of happiness—of the inclusion or exclusion of some object in or out of the causal nexus surrounding the momentary, concrete ego-idea.*⁸

Although Ehrenfels has himself thus used introspection as a partial evidence of his theory, he insists that the attempt to disprove his theory solely on introspective grounds must be disregarded owing to the diverse results which introspection yields with different people. There are, however, some other objections to this view, as for instance the fact that it fails to consider attention as a factor in the formation or direction of desire. Ehrenfels insists in reply to this that it seems to him more natural to define attention in terms of desire than *vice versa*. In fact, "to pay attention" to something is in itself one form of striving, with the purpose of forming or holding perfectly clear ideas of the object in consciousness. He finds even less difficulty in answering the objection that some fundamental faculty of desire must be presupposed in order to explain self-consciousness, for, whatever self-consciousness is, it is evident that it can be quite readily explained in terms solely of the act of imagination and the various experiences we have in our own bodies.

To the criticism that his theory involves such a power of abstraction and such a complexity of psychological functioning that it is impossible to imagine desire as being possible for children and animals—who must nevertheless be thought of as capable of desire—Ehrenfels replies that the actual degree of power of abstraction presupposed is much less than is necessary for the formulation or understanding of his theory concerning it, and even much less than would appear to be necessary from a first reading of the theory itself. Thus, the "concrete idea of the ego" is really a very long name for a very simple and elementary psychical reality, which may consist simply in the concrete realization of the momentary content

⁸. Ehrenfels *System*, I, pp. 248f.

of consciousness, or even of just a part of this, or merely the idea of one's own body. As a minimum, however, it must be conceded that the concept of causal relation does involve a certain power of abstraction. But to deny a certain minimal power of abstraction to animals is to revert to an outworn animal psychology which regarded animals as being *toto cœlo* different from men. In conclusion, Ehrenfels frankly admits that his theory of desire is strictly and completely deterministic and that it finds no room for an indeterministic dualism. It will be necessary to wait until we have occasion to discuss the forces affecting the value judgment before we shall be able to investigate all of the repercussions of this last statement.

The General Theory of Value

Ehrenfels brings his first volume of *System der Werttheorie* to a close with certain general conclusions; and we may very well round out the present chapter with the presentation of the more important of them. If one take a broad view of his general theory of value, it is apparent that for him value includes pretty much everything which occurs in mental life. The processes of valuation are not recondite and abstruse phenomena which imply some hitherto unknown or unexplored field of the psychic world; they are simply a special way of looking at the ordinary events and processes which were the common stock in trade of all of the psychologists of his day. He has definitely rejected any notion of a special field of "value phenomena," of a faculty of desire, of a mysterious value essence, or of any other of the many attempts to draw a circle around certain types of behavior and consciousness and set them apart as being "value phenomena."

If value is such a broad concept it would seem that very little could be done in the study of values other than Ehrenfels has accomplished in the portions of his work already studied. And indeed this would be the case were there not certain uniformities of human behavior which can be classified and studied abstractly. If values are to have any definite meaning it must be as one of these classes of fairly uniform behavior.

Ehrenfels bases the rest of his value theory on the attempt to discover those characteristics common to valuations as such; this naturally excludes values which are primarily the mediate or derived values which arise as a result of some rational or judgmental process—the technical values, in a word. If we were to include them in a general value theory our field of investigation would forthwith become as wide as human endeavor, because practically all human endeavor is the more or less intelligent adaptation of means to ends, let the ends be what they may. And indeed it is obvious that to treat of all cases of mediate values or all types of technical values would be to undertake a presentation of almost all of human science and art. Thus when the doctor advises on the treatment of a cold, he is really engaging upon a problem in values; or when the engineer designs a bridge, he is constantly face to face with the question as to whether it is *better* to do this or that—again, values. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of value theory which justly concerns itself with these technical values—or as one may call them when one is not concerned with their technical aspects but solely with their mediate character, extrinsic values. Ehrenfels points out that just as the intrinsic values are to be best studied from the standpoint of their origin in the valuation process in the mind of the individual, so extrinsic values are best studied from the viewpoint of their objects, and of the judgments which mediate the values. We thus have two broad categories of value objects: human values (morality, æsthetics, and religious value systems), and the efficiencies and qualities of non-human things and animals, giving rise to the value disciplines of economics, engineering, and related sciences. Law is the meeting place of the two fields of ethics and economics, and therefore in need of treatment from both viewpoints.

There is little else in Ehrenfels's theory of motivation and valuation which was not involved in his debate with Meinong concerning the definition of value. We have not been able to do much more than sketch the value theories of both these men, but we should have by now a sufficiently clear idea of the general character of their views so that we can with profit turn

to the consideration of those questions on which they differed most persistently. Meinong brought to the debate carefully formulated definitions of many value concepts and a full realization of the significance of the theory of knowledge and judgment for a mastery of the problems of value. We have now seen that Ehrenfels enters the discussion well equipped with an understanding of the processes of wishing and willing, of choice, and of motivation. These two viewpoints are of equal importance and it is to be hoped that neither will be unduly slighted in the presentation of the discussion which arose in the attempt to weld them into a unitary theory of value.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Definition of Value

VIII

THE DEFINITION OF VALUE

IN THE foregoing chapters we have had the opportunity to see the general character of the theory of value of the Second Austrian School. Throughout our work so far, however, we have persistently avoided certain questions which are of such a controversial nature, and yet are so fundamental for any thorough understanding of the theory of value as a whole, that it seemed well to postpone any detailed investigation of them until we should be in a position to consider them more or less in isolation, freed from collateral issues, and with the study we have made up to this point as a background against which to project these particular problems.

The Problem

We shall set for ourselves a question which seems at first very simple, namely, the definition of value. But we have here in mind the ultimate philosophical definition, not merely the terminological definition sufficient to fix the nomenclature of the science. We are to look at this question not merely from the viewpoint of the convenience of the student or of the writer insisting upon *Definitionsfreiheit*; rather we shall regard it as an avenue by which to approach if possible a little nearer to the real character of values and of the valuation process.

This question was never expressed in so many words by Meinong and Ehrenfels because it grew up gradually in the course of their writing and mutual discussion. That they were conscious, however, that some such question lay at the heart of their differences of opinion is evident from the persistence with which they attempt to clarify their ideas on these points. Neither was to be satisfied with any sort of compromise, for they had both accepted the methodology of the new empiricism

which insists that the inner perceptions of the individual thinker are just as much data needing explanation as are his sense impressions. Furthermore both Meinong and Ehrenfels had agreed that one of the duties incumbent on the student of values was to clarify and define—not neglect—the ideas and notions involved in the every-day language of the common people. The concept of value is certainly a concept in daily use, and the student of values must understand this concept as he finds it; he cannot content himself with retreating to his study, there to excogitate a new concept.

In view of this it would have been quite beside the point for Meinong and Ehrenfels to have sought to compromise their differences by some easy verbal definition of their separate concepts. They were both using concepts of values which appeared to be different; were they the same or were they different? And of course, closely bound up with this problem lay questions as to the function of the desires, of the feelings, of ideas, and of judgments in the process of valuation. These were all contributory concepts which both men had inherited from the empirical psychology of Brentano; that they had developed different theories out of the common store of raw material simply meant that the task had not as yet been completed. To be extremely meticulous in this final task of definition should not be interpreted as indicating that they were contending for their own ideas merely as such, but that this is the only way in which truth can be served in so difficult a field as value theory.

It is well perhaps to point out that the interests which had so far dominated their thought were different for the two men. Ehrenfels clearly recognized these differences as the following citation with reference to their respective theories shows.

Should one attempt to describe the fundamental character of the two works in a few words, one might designate Meinong's investigation as the statics and mine as the dynamics, of the theory of value and ethics. While I paid attention chiefly to the transformation and development of values, and considered definitions and conceptions only so far as seemed indispensable for my purpose, Meinong furnishes us a comprehensive view of fundamental conceptions in the theory of value and ethics, and endeavors

to establish and bring within fixed rules whatever is permanent in the constant transformation of the phenomena of general values, and especially of moral values. The two investigations supplement rather than contradict each other, and if, as I intend, I should undertake a systematic presentation of the subject in the near future, I should have to reproduce many portions of Meinong's work almost unchanged.¹

In trying to understand, then, the interrelations in the thought of the two men we shall find it necessary to investigate first of all the following phases: (1) The question as to which of the definitions of value—Ehrenfels's definition in terms of desire, or Meinong's in terms of feelings—serves best for the general theory of value. This problem really calls for a decision as to whether we desire something because we value it, or value it because we desire it. (2) Very closely related to this is the question as to the nature of choice, and of the conflict of motivation. With regard to the significance of the judgment in the valuation process there are two questions which we can most profitably treat separately: (3) the function of the judgment in the course of the formation of desire, and (4) the function of the judgment as an essential factor in valuation.

Which is Prior, Desire or Value?

In the earlier works of the two men their respective definitions of value were each worded practically without reference to the definition in the writings of the other. There is mention in Ehrenfels's early articles of emotions only as subordinate factors in the formation of desire, as rather inflexible "feeling dispositions" which were part of the data of the valuation process. It must be noted that there is a difference between feelings as Meinong uses the term and these feeling dispositions which are the basis for desire in the theory of Ehrenfels. Feelings are inner sensations actually experienced; feeling dispositions are the implicit and unobservable preëstablished tendencies to this or that sort of emotional or volitional reaction. If desire is based on just such blind feeling dispositions, and value is contingent on desire, then it would seem useless

1. Ehrenfels, "The Ethical Theory of Value," pp. 371f.

to try to erect a separate "value theory" other than as a branch of descriptive psychology; and even such a theory merely would be saying over again in a new and even misleading terminology what had already been said by the physiologist and the psychologist. So Meinong, in defense of the possibility of value theory at all, calls attention briefly to Ehrenfels's definition, as follows:

. . . Ehrenfels immediately concludes that to have value is the same thing as to be desired ("Werttheorie und Ethik," I, p. 89) . . . and indeed experience seems to show that nothing will be desired which does not have value for the one who desires. But the psychology of every-day life contradicts him, insofar as there seems to be here an inversion of the natural relation of things, since value is not first created by desire, but much rather is generally found to have existed before the latter. In this at least so much is right, that the value judgment very often precedes the desire, and this value judgment without desire exhibits at all events a fundamental difference in contrast with the latter.²

Here we see the extent to which Meinong places reliance in the psychology of every-day life. Every one has experienced cases where he first learned to value an object and then came to desire it; in fact this is the normal course of the value experience of the growing child, as Meinong has well demonstrated in the course of his *Untersuchungen*.

Meinong returns a little later to the closely related problem as to which is prior: value or desire.

It seems to me . . . that the interrelation between feeling and desire may be established without criticism only with the help of the value-concept, and in the following way: nothing will be desired except what, in case it existed, possessed at least subjective value for me. In this sense every desire object must be a value object for the person desiring; whether, in this case, desire is founded upon value or value upon desire, no attempt is made here to prejudge, and indeed no such attempt can be made, because, if I mistake not, the one case just as well as the other actually arises.³

Here Meinong seems to give with one hand and take away with the other, for he says as plainly as possible that value is the logical *prius*, and then confesses doubt as to this point.

². Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 15.

³. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

What he has in mind is undoubtedly the fact that there are cases of subjective values being based upon desires, as well as contrary cases. That Meinong was really convinced that value and desire could never coincide—and hence that desire could not possibly be the defining condition for value—is evident from the following passage:

Still more tangible is another circumstance. I cannot desire that which is already in existence, but something only insofar as it is not in existence . . . Value, however, is so little dependent upon this presupposition that much rather value can be ascribed to an object only when and insofar as it exists.⁴

Ehrenfels tried to meet this criticism by resort to the concept of "potentiality" by saying,

We ascribe value to those things which we either actually desire, or would desire in fact if we were not convinced of their existence. *The value of a thing is its desirability* . . . Also the magnitude of the value is the desirability, that is, it is proportional to the strength of the actual desire with respect to it; the stronger we desire an object or would desire it, the higher the value which it possesses for us.⁵

In this statement it would appear that Ehrenfels tries to evade the issue, which is that only existing things can have value and only non-existing things can arouse desire.

At a later date Meinong brings forward still other objections to the attempt to define values in terms of desire. As we have seen, in the theory of Ehrenfels, a desire is based on an idea which wins in the struggle between ideas at the margin of consciousness; in so winning, it represses other ideas, which are also ideas of value objects. Thus the student who abandoned the study of the *corpus juris* to enjoy a holiday in the hills finally gave precedence to one desire; the repressed ideas could not furnish the basis for desires, hence (in his system) for values. But Meinong insists that they would be values just the same. Meinong further points out that there are many things of which no one is thinking (hence no one desires

⁴. *Ibid.*, pp. 15f.

⁵. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 53.

them) which nevertheless remain values. In some of these cases Ehrenfels could not even save his definition by suggesting that they constitute "potential desires," especially in the cases of subjects who through many bitter experiences have come to such a state of resignation that they have practically ceased to desire at all and hope has long since vanished; nevertheless these no longer desired or even desirable objects are still values.

One must note that there is here the possibility of a confusion between what one might designate as the subjective and the objective meanings of the word "desirable." The objective meaning of the word might open the door to the possibility of a Platonic world of the Ideas, and therefore in fairness to Meinong we must insist that his approach to the objectively desirable is strictly through the subjective valuation process. Values are to be found and studied only in the subjective human psychology. This does not mean that they are therefore to be circumscribed by the limits of any individual psychological boundary.

To condemn Ehrenfels's desire-theory on the grounds that some individuals have lost the power to desire what is of real value was really the *tu quoque* argument, for this criticism of divergence between fact and theory had been leveled at Meinong's own feelings-theory with equally telling effect. Indeed, it was apparently against some such verbal criticism that Meinong felt very early that he had to defend his definition of value as based on feeling. In the course of this defense he came to an entirely new statement of his theory of choice, a restatement which occasioned some confusion but ultimately brought about a marked advance in the general theory of value.

Choice and Motivation

This criticism forced Meinong to realize that when he had said that value was based on feelings he had overlooked the serious difficulty that it frequently happens that the value

varies in magnitude in a way differently from the variation in magnitude of the feelings, and *vice versa*. For instance one may receive a letter from a distant friend with feelings out of all proportion to the worth of the letter; or one who has long been in good health has only minimal feelings of pleasure in realizing his good health. People who have always been wealthy cannot "understand the value of a dollar." Such examples might be multiplied endlessly.

The Austrian School of Economics had attempted to meet some of these difficulties—particularly those associated with the explanation of the anomalies of "free economic goods" such as water and air—by the importation into economic thought of the concept of quantity. But in what sense can one speak of the quantity of an absent friend, or the quantity of one's persistent good health—except in a loosely analogical way?

Meinong does not attempt to analyze the Austrian quantity concept as such, but proceeds at once to the attempt to bring these anomalous cases into his general theory. He finds this is possible if, instead of basing value upon the feelings which are the concomitants of the existence judgment only, he define value as the product of the interaction of two such feelings, one based on the judgment that the object exists, the other on the assumption that the object does not exist, or *vice versa*, the assumption that the object exists and the judgment that it does not exist.

. . . The magnitude of the value depends not only upon the intensity with which the existence of the object is valued, but also upon the intensity with which the non-existence of the object is valued . . . The value of a thing is a function of the intensity of the value-feeling bound up with the existence as well as that bound up with the non-existence of the object. Inasmuch as the magnitude of the value varies directly with these two intensities, but does not become zero when either of these intensities is zero, so it would seem to be simplest to represent this state of affairs through the formula:

$$V = C I + C' I'$$

where I is the intensity of the existence feeling, and I' that of the non-existence feeling, and C and C' are constants of proportionality, of which one must employ two so long as one does not know whether the effect of I and I' respectively on the result is relatively equal or not.⁶

These two feelings are what Meinong came later to call "Opposed feelings" (*Gegengefühle*). It is obvious that not only do they account for the extreme cases of divergence between a particular value-feeling and the underlying value, such as the minimal feelings attending long continued good health or good fortune, but they also are adequate to account for all economic valuations where hitherto the economists have made use of the "law of diminishing utilities." In fact it is an improvement on the economists' law, for it does not presuppose any knowledge of the total quantity of the good in question. The law of diminishing utility is clearly a special case under the law of opposed feelings, for when I know that there is a large quantity of a given good available, then the non-existence-feeling which I experience upon forming the assumption that I must give up any particular item of this large supply is very negligible. It is not at all clear that the Value (V) in the above equation is equal to the *sum* of the intensities CI and $C'I'$. In the case of economic values it is evident that my valuation of a free economic good is not the sum of a high valuation of the possession of water and a low valuation of the absence of water. Water would then have a high valuation, and would not be a free good. The true nature of the economic valuation will be clear if we realize that every economic valuation is an exchange-valuation, a comparison between two goods. In the absolute sense there is no "free good" for even water requires that I make the effort to dip it up, air demands that I make the effort to breath it.

The operation of the exchange of two economic goods involves four concepts: utility, satisfaction, need, and cost. Their interrelation in terms of the theory of opposed feelings will be clear from the following diagram:

⁶ Meinong, "Ueber Werthhaltung und Wert," p. 337.

OPPOSED FEELINGS (*Gegengefühle*)

	EXISTENCE-FEELINGS: (PLEASANT)	NON-EXISTENCE- FEELINGS: (UNPLEASANT)
The presupposition of the value-feeling is a JUDGMENT:	The actual utility to me of a good which I now possess and con- template surrendering UTILITY (A)	The sacrifice which I must undergo if I cannot secure possession of the good which I wish to buy NEED (B)
The presupposition of the value-feeling is an ASSUMPTION:	The potential useful- ness to me of the good which I wish to buy SATISFACTION (C)	The sacrifice I am willing to make in order to get the object I wish to buy COST (D)

This might be called the total buyer's pattern; opposed to it is a similar total pattern for the seller. Obviously an exchange can be effected only on condition that the arithmetic sum of the feelings (A) plus (D) for the buyer does not exceed the arithmetic sum of his feelings (B) plus (C); and that furthermore the opposite condition holds with respect to the seller; otherwise either the buyer or the seller would not have a sufficient inducement.

This illustration of the possibilities for further development which lie in Meinong's theory of opposed feelings must not be allowed, however, to carry us too far afield. What is of real importance in the consideration of the opposed feelings is the nature of the psychological process by which these feelings combine to give us a valuation of the good in question. In the case of the economic good the actual exchange is conditioned by two summation processes: one in the mind of the buyer, the other in that of the seller. But this does not mean that the *valuation* of either of the goods in question is arrived at by a summation of the utility and cost, or of the need and satisfac-

tion, connected with it. Any one of these four can furnish a basis for valuation: as witness the conflict of opinion with regard to which one furnishes the proper basis for railroad valuation at the present time in the United States. An individual, in dealing with a given concrete case, will allow his mind to fluctuate between the different bases; at times he is overwhelmed by a sense of need, at times he is dominated by a realization of the cost, or again he may pay attention only to the utility of what he now possesses, or to the satisfaction which he anticipates. The advertiser distorts the true economic situation in that he skillfully overemphasizes the last named: painting a vivid pen picture of the pleasures to be anticipated from the advertised good.

Ehrenfels pointed out that this summation process could not always be a simple arithmetic addition:

. . . Consider for instance the following case: a sick man is about to take a bitter medicine. The opposite judgments: "I will take the medicine" . . . and "I will not take the medicine" . . . both awaken in him a feeling of pain, the first because of its bitter taste, the second because of the interrupted treatment. If he decides to take the medicine, it shows that this has a value for him, which certainly is not equal to the sum of the intensities of the two feelings of pain . . .⁷

Ehrenfels goes on to suggest that the proper formula for this case would be the difference rather than the sum. But here we must note that Ehrenfels is confusing two different things: valuation and motivation. The medicine would have value for him even if he decided not to take it; it would simply have insufficient value to lead him to undergo the unpleasant sensation of its taste. The value of the medicine is to be measured by the two opposed feelings: one based on the judgment that the medicine exists, the other on the thought that the medicine might not exist. Each of these feelings of course includes within itself all of the known facts about the medicine: its curative powers, its unpleasant taste, etc. The value of the medicine is not determined by the algebraic difference between two opposed desires, nor is it contingent upon the outcome of the struggle of motivation.

⁷ Ehrenfels, "The Ethical Theory of Value," p. 374.

Meinong had, however, given ample justification for such a misunderstanding of his theory when, in the course of his discussion of this revision of his value theory he had plunged into motivation theory as well. An instance of this is the following statement, quoted from the same article:

. . . As between two available objects, I choose that which I desire the more intensively, for which I have a stronger longing. But the strict relationship between this longing and the value-feeling is a well known fact; I desire more intensively that state of affairs toward which I have the stronger value-feelings, when it exists, regardless of whether the longing is based on the value-feeling, or the value-feeling on the longing.⁸

This is, of course, a long step toward a desire theory of value, as Ehrenfels was the first to recognize; he does not say, however, that value is to be defined in terms of desire, although he is quite willing to go a long way apparently toward such a definition, especially where he says:

. . . one can also designate value as the capacity of an object to maintain itself as an object of desire in the struggle of motives, or if one prefer the expression, in the struggle for existence.⁹

It should be noted, however, that Meinong here falls back upon desire only in the special case (very important for the theory of motivation) of the conflict between two incompatible goods.

Even so this would seem to be only the first step to the complete merging of Meinong's theory into the desire theory of value. Here we have value designated as the product of a struggle; desire has been defined by Ehrenfels in almost identical terms. Meinong is therefore careful to point out at once that

It is obvious that that which determines the result in cases of conflict is not the product of the same conflict, but on the contrary, represents one of those forces which first brought about the conflict.¹⁰

Ehrenfels's only possible answer to this is to contend that it represents much too complex a theory of the determination of

⁸. Meinong, "Ueber Werthhaltung und Wert," p. 338.

⁹. *Ibid.*, p. 340.

¹⁰. *Ibid.*

value to be consonant with our knowledge of human psychology. To enforce this criticism he enumerates in detail the seven steps necessary, according to Meinong's theory, to discover the value of an object in the case of a motivation conflict. The first step is to imagine an object, O_1 , as existing, and therewith to call forth the existence feeling contingent upon this existence judgment. Then imagine O_1 as not existing, and therewith its concomitant non-existence feeling. Then one must somehow combine these two opposed feelings so as to determine the "motivation power" of O_1 . Steps four, five, and six are analogous operations for Object O_2 . Finally step seven is the "conflict" between the two motivation powers of the two objects. One could of course reply to Ehrenfels's strictures with the *tu quoque*, for his own theory, as we have seen, is by no means simple, as described on paper. It should be pointed out, however, that this is almost the only excursion which Meinong anywhere makes into the theory of motivation, and he clearly shows that he is not at home in discussing such questions. That Meinong was willing to make such concessions to a theory which he had all along opposed measures his open-mindedness in the search for truth. Nevertheless it still seems to him that the definition of desire in terms of value rather than the reverse is the "natural way" to clarify the problem.

The Function of the Judgment in the Formation of Desire

Ehrenfels does not confine his attempts at the substantiation of his own theory of value to criticisms of Meinong's theory. He tries to build up out of this criticism a constructive theory, showing how the elements which Meinong employs can just as well serve in the harness of his own theoretic chariot. A striking example of this is his criticism of the definition of value in terms of judgment-feelings, when he says this definition is insufficient because the actual emotional response which I experience may and generally does vary a great deal depending upon the liveliness and intuitiveness with which the idea of the object comes to mind. If we are to rely upon the "existence feeling" for the determination of value, then we must agree

upon some definite degree of vividness of the idea as the "standard" or "zero" conditions for controlling the determination—following here the technique of the physical laboratory. What degree of vividness of the idea shall we adopt as these "zero" conditions for the accurate determination of value? Abstractly speaking, there seems to be no reason for insisting upon any definite degree, except that in general it would follow that the higher the degree of vividness of the idea the more intensively I would react to it emotionally, and hence the more intensively I would desire it.

In so far there seems to be this proportionality between the vividness of the idea and the intensity of the existence feelings, it would seem that for the purposes of purely relative measurement any degree of vividness might be adopted as "zero conditions," with the understanding that all value comparisons be made at this intensity. Ehrenfels suggests two reasons for insisting that the proper intensity be the greatest possible intensity: (1) Under such conditions all value comparisons will be made "on as large a scale as possible," and hence they will be relatively more accurate; and (2) we have a certain collateral means for telling when we are imagining an idea with this degree of vividness, for

. . . we never imagine the existence or the non-existence of an object . . . so intuitively and in so lively a fashion as at the time of forming and during the period of flourishing of a desire for a given object.¹¹

Even though it be true, however, that we never imagine an object so vividly as when we are desiring it, nevertheless there still may be very considerable differences in the intensity with which we imagine this object and the intensity with which we imagine another. Thus we would have no assurance whatever that our value determination or comparison was in any sense more uniform than if we depended merely upon judgment. Furthermore Ehrenfels published this argument almost two years too late to convict Meinong of the error of his theory, for in his "Ueber Werthaltung und Wert" we have seen that

¹¹. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 57.

Meinong was already convinced that one could not rely upon the intensity of the feelings as a measure of the value, and had therefore introduced his opposed feelings.

Ehrenfels's attempt to secure some "standard intensity" for the idea of the value object would appear furthermore to be hopeless on his own theory, because he at once proceeds to show that the judgment also plays a part in determining this intensity, thus introducing a "third variable." The judgment certainly serves in many cases to raise our emotional reaction to a high pitch, especially in cases of expectation, for "a little bit of hope goes much further than all the straining of fancy." And in many cases the mere judgment that something "actually happened," or that some event is occurring or is about to occur in our immediate vicinity—as when we know that only a few brick walls separate us from a concert we are longing to hear—serves to heighten the effect on our emotions of the idea of the object. This is undoubtedly a collateral effect of the existence judgment, and accounts for many of the contemporary features of journalism and advertising. Ehrenfels makes the rather extreme assertion that the feeling of expectation is the most intensive existence feeling of which we are capable—although one wonders whether it is ever as intense as the miser's "possessive-feeling." He makes the whole argument turn on expectations, as, for instance, when he concedes that in general one may say that the liveliest possible imagination of the tone-pictures of the Fifth Symphony does not arouse in us as vivid an idea of this object as when it is accompanied by the expectation that we are shortly to hear it. He explains this by the fact that the expectation is accompanied by many other and deeper sensations, whereas the bare idea is not so accompanied. But if one could, somehow or other, have all of these deeper "vital sensations" as well as the idea of the object, without the mediation of the judgment, then the judgment would be superfluous.

He concedes that there are instances where the existence-judgment does seem to be absolutely essential in order to have the full sweep of feeling. Thus

. . . Even more than with pleasant ideas the mere idea of the unpleasant seems to lose its emotional effect without the recognizing act of judgment. Indeed often, as for instance in the theatrical tragedy, the feeling seems, without the act of judgment, to turn into the contrary feeling, while we reap a not altogether unmixed but nevertheless predominantly pleasant feeling from the presentation of events which, if judged to be actual, would awaken in us the most intense pain . . .¹²

It is true that there are many subordinate features of the real deathbed scene which in the interest of histrionic art are omitted from the stage presentation. This seems to be due merely to cultural and æsthetic standards, for among "lower and cruder" peoples it is the presentation of actual tragedy (Bull Fighting and Gladiatorial Shows) which arouses the "tragic" feelings of the spectators.

Thus Ehrenfels feels forced to concede that in the case of the stage tragedy it is the very absence of the ability to make the judgment that "these events are real" which arouses the emotions, whereas he apparently overlooks the fact that there is actually possible the opposed judgment; i.e., that the hero is not really dying. Without question the tragedy is a case of mixed emotions, but merely because one specific judgment is conspicuous by its absence we are not authorized to exclude all other types of judgment. Or again, in his analysis of one's pleasure at reminiscence on the past when the thought (judgment) that one must shortly relive that past would give pain, he suggests that the real difference between the two is not to be attributed to the presence or absence of the judgment, in itself, but to the fact that in the former case it is psychologically possible to forget many of the unpleasant features of a past which would be anticipated with horror if one really expected to experience that past again. The same criticism applies here, for even though a particular judgment (e.g., "I must live my past over again") is absent, nevertheless another judgment has automatically taken its place, namely "I shall not relive my past." Therefore to speak at all, as Ehrenfels does, of the presence or absence of the judgment, is very confusing in an attempt to grasp the significance of judgment in valuation.

¹² *Ibid.*, I, p. 60.

Ehrenfels expresses his final views of the function of the judgment in the valuation process as follows:

From all these considerations we believe that we can draw the conclusion that at the entrance of the existence-feeling into consciousness the effect of the act of judgment is restricted to the raising as high as possible of the intuitiveness and liveliness of the given ideas, or as the case may be to the bringing into consciousness of certain image-complexes which, without the judgment, would be apt to remain below the threshold of attention. With this we complete the third modification in Meinong's formula, in that we eliminate the reference to judgment entirely, and adopt the view that we are to understand by existence feeling that feeling which arises *upon the most intuitive, lively, and complete imagination possible* of the existence or non-existence of an object (or as the case may be, from the actual course of events resultant upon the absence of the object).¹³

That in many instances the existence-judgment is actually instrumental in increasing the vividness and completeness with which one forms the idea of the object concerned does not in any sense prevent the judgment from also being essential to the definition of value as such. It might well be both instrumental in affecting the vividness of the idea and also (by its ubiquity) essential to the complete definition of value.

The True Function of Judgment in Valuation

The question underlying all of these discussions is as to the true purpose of value theory. Is it purely descriptive, or is it normative? It must be descriptive, else it would not be a theory. Value theory as such is the attempt to break away from systems which believed they were the repositories of unquestionable truth and the guardians of sacrosanct values. One would not be awake to the demands of the new empiricism—which attempts to carry the methods which have been so successful and fruitful in the exact sciences over into the much more nebulous and difficult questions of philosophy and psychology—if he did not agree with the necessity of such a break. But value theory must be a description of *norms* as such. It does not pretend to be normative, but it cannot shut its

¹³. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 61f.

eyes to the fact that norms exist. And the fundamental characteristic of any norm is that it is something more than mere behavior, mere acquiescence with the emotional and instinctive forces which dominate human activity. Ehrenfels throughout has contented himself with the merely descriptive task. But Meinong insists time and again that although value theory cannot overlook the significance of feelings and desires as elements of the phenomena with which it deals, yet it cannot be content with these mechanisms. Whereas Ehrenfels has tried to force valuation and motivation into the same pigeon-hole, Meinong has insisted that we must even make a distinction between valuation and value. Value is the object-like norm, related to but not dependent on the particular valuations which express it. Value implies thought, and thought implies judgment.

We are thus brought face to face with the problem of the function of the judgment in the process of valuation, not in its collateral rôle as mere enhancer of the vividness of the idea, but in the sense in which Meinong had always spoken of it as presuppositional to the value as such. The problem is a difficult one, and we must deal with it at first only in extreme or limiting cases, where the different factors involved stand out more clearly. In keeping with this methodology Ehrenfels cites the case of a young scion of a princely family who values the warrior virtues of one of his ancestors who died, let us say, in the Twelfth Century. This value could reside, according to the strict theory of Meinong, only in an existence feeling having as presupposition the existence judgment with reference to the object, the virtues. But the noble ancestor has been in his tomb some seven hundred years, taking with him all his warrior virtues, which certainly cannot be said to exist any longer. And furthermore, at the time the virtues themselves were in existence there was no descendant then alive to form this value judgment. Thus one would seem to be faced with a dilemma: either something which does not exist can have value (which would throw open the door to allowing value to

round-squares and castles in the Moon), or else value does not imply the act of valuing (which so far has been the cornerstone of Meinong's system).

Meinong had foresightedly attempted to avoid just such a dilemma by suggesting that in such cases of past and future values we agree—for practical purposes—to employ the terminology that such and such object "had" value at one time, or that it "will have" or "would have" value in the future or under the condition that it existed. In demanding this concession Meinong is true to the fundamental tenets of the new empiricism—which always seeks to avoid the absurdity of carrying a principle to "its logical conclusion" when such conclusion flies in the face of common sense. Nevertheless we cannot fall back on "common sense" merely as an escape from an embarrassing argument. The real issue involved here is whether Meinong, by positing value of future goods, does violence to his own demand that actual existence shall be a condition of value, confining desire to the non-existent.

In meeting this issue we must note that although desire be restricted to the non-existent objects, the converse does not necessarily follow, that non-existent goods are capable of furnishing only objects of desire. In short the world of the non-existent holds many things which are of value but which are not actively desired or even wished-for. Even in Ehrenfels's own theory desire is a very intensive, active, persistent, tropistic phenomenon, and for sound psychological reasons cannot possibly turn to every possible object capable of arousing it under favorable conditions. There must be a competition between desires, a struggle of motivation; but there need be no such conflict between all of the compossible and potential values of the existent and non-existent worlds.

Our dilemma still leaves us, however, with the problem of the definition of past and future values. It would seem that the way out of this particular dilemma is to look squarely at it and see if it is really a dilemma. Does the present-day scion of the noble line have a value feeling which has as its object the warrior virtues of his dead ancestor? Or rather, is not the real

object of his value feeling the present-day evidence that the long dead ancestor really (or presumptively) had those virtues? Were it not for this existing evidence—in the form of titles, lands, social position—there would certainly be very little value feeling. The proof is that every one of us is descended from ancestors—if we go back far enough—who possessed all of the warrior virtues one could possibly desire. One is forcibly reminded of the lady who wishes to join a patriotic society one of the entrance requirements of which is proof that the would-be member is a descendant of some patriot who fought in one of the wars in the early history of the country. Members of such societies seldom pursue their investigations until they unearth what were the predilections and partisanship of *all* of their ancestors who were alive at the time of the given war. It is sufficient to find one who was a patriot, and very important to possess *proof* that he was, and that one is descended from him.

We can now broaden the scope of our inquiry. Meinong is perfectly conscious of the fact that these extensions of his theory have brought him into difficulties analogous to those which had compelled Ehrenfels to define value as

. . . that relation, falsely objectified by speech, of a thing or object O to the desire-disposition of a subject S, as a result of which the O could be desired by S insofar as and as soon as the S does not now possess or might lose the conviction of the existence of O.¹⁴

To take the simplest of such cases, rather than an extreme instance, everyone has had the experience of attempting to form a value judgment when the normal conditions of such judgment were totally lacking; i.e., when one did not know at all whether or not the particular object existed. Under such circumstances it is always possible to form a hypothetical judgment of the form: "It would be valuable, if . . ." Such a judgment, however, is in no sense a valuation in the strict sense of the term (i.e., a *Werthaltung*); it is a purely intellectual evaluation, an emotionally neutral estimate of the value of the given object (a *Bewertung*).

¹⁴ Ehrenfels, "Von der Wertdefinition zum Motivationsgesetz," p. 103.

Meinong here introduces again his new concept of the opposed feelings, when he points out that the total value of an object can never be felt; one must always take into consideration the two opposed feelings. At the most only one of the two presuppositions of the value is a judgment, the other being an assumption; and in the case cited above both are assumptions and the value can be said to be "hypothetical." Meinong insists that it is better to recognize that the total list of values is to be divided between the actual and the hypothetical than to reduce all valuation to "desire dispositions" as Ehrenfels suggested.

The Definition of Value

So far our efforts at finding a unified definition of value to which both Meinong and Ehrenfels can agree have been completely checked. And indeed the writer knows of no such definition which they both publicly accepted in their writings, much though they strove for it. Yet that their theories were really very close to each other is patent, and it is therefore incumbent on us, as students of this problem, to push their inquiries a little further in the hope that this vexing question will appear in a new light. That we must be careful not to value any such unity—as a sort of fetich—above the evident facts is a perfectly obvious requirement of correct methodology.

We may commence this effort with the investigation of that aspect of values on which Meinong and Ehrenfels agreed with a unanimity of opinion greater than in almost any other part of their work: the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic values. In his first discussion of them Ehrenfels says of intrinsic values that one cannot speak of them as a valuation (*Wertschätzung*), i.e., an intellectual weighing of values, an appraisal, but only as a *valuing* (*Werthaltung*, *Wertung*). He immediately contrasts these characteristics of intrinsic values with the extrinsic values, concerning which he says:

. . . one may accept as fundamental law—to be easily verified by experience—that—in contrast to intrinsic values—extrinsic values are always to be constructed only by the intermediation of the reflection or of some

other activity of the reason, that thus here valuation appears as a *value estimation* (*Wertschätzung*) or as a *value-judgment* (*Werturteil*), and that we esteem objects as *extrinsic values* always in the degree in which we believe *intrinsic values* to be dependent upon their existence.¹⁵

Meinong also has had this distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic values in mind in all of his analyses of the valuation process, and reached essentially the same conclusion. He bases this on the distinction which he draws between the "primary presuppositional judgments" and the "secondary presuppositional judgments." The former are the existence-judgments *par excellence* on the basis of which we are convinced of the existence of the value object; the latter are judgments as to the characteristics or features of the value object in terms of which it is an object of value to me. Thus if I am pleased with the possession of a certain key, this pleasure is posited first on the primary presuppositional judgment that the key actually exists in my possession (e.g., when I have found it again after having lost it), and second, on the secondary presuppositional judgment that the key will permit me to enter a room which I desire to enter.

Ehrenfels recognized the essential unity between the two theories at this point, and in so doing called attention to some of the wider implications which flow from it, when he says:

Particular mention must be made of the doctrine of the direct and indirect estimation of value, inherent and effect value, in which Meinong accepts my position of the theory of value, not, however, without enriching it in detail with many noteworthy contributions. Meinong seeks especially to explain psychologically the fact of the indirect estimation of value by postulating as a requisite the addition of secondary judgments to the principal judgment, or the essential judgment with which the feeling occurs. The indirect estimation of the value of money, for instance, is rendered psychologically possible by the fact that to the principal judgment "I possess such and such a quantity of money" are added all the secondary judgments which tell me what I am able to accomplish by the use of this money. These determinations render possible a still more precise limitation of the scope of theoretical considerations in the discussion of value. The

¹⁵. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," i, p. 95.

scope reaches here just as far as the possible errors in value, and these reach as far as the participation of indirect judgment in the production of the fact of value.¹⁶

"Inherent" and "effect" values are evidently the same as intrinsic and extrinsic values, being probably literal translations from *Eigenwerte* and *Wirkungswerte*, the terms most likely to have been in the German text of his article.

Meinong accepts, furthermore, the distinction of which Ehrenfels makes so much in his own work between immediate and mediate values. He differs from Ehrenfels here in a minor point, in that whereas Ehrenfels had found that A can be a mediate value with respect to B either on a causal basis, or on a partly causal, partly "constitutive," basis, Meinong finds only the causal basis for this mediation. A causal mediation applies, however, only to those cases where one object (A) is valued because of another (B). Meinong suggests another case: That it is possible to have a mediate value which has reference to no object outside of itself, as e.g., the possibility of valuing a particular object because someone else also values it. Mediation of this sort is too complex to consider in detail in this place; it accounts for many cases of change of æsthetic appreciation and artistic "movements," "crazes" and "fads," as well as for a good share of the phenomena of advertising and "style."

But Meinong agrees with Ehrenfels that not everything can be a mediate value, for, as he puts it:

. . . it is *a priori* obvious that, if many things are of value to us for the sake of other things, there must finally be an end to this continual reference to others, and then we have the case of valuing something "for its own sake."¹⁷

We may take it then that so far as the distinction between mediate and immediate values, and extrinsic and intrinsic values, is concerned, Meinong and Ehrenfels are in essential agreement. Both of them insist that the valuation process is different for the two cases: Intrinsic values are just held dear

16. Ehrenfels, "The Ethical Theory of Value," p. 375.

17. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 60.

in and for themselves, without any rationalistic judgmental process as to their qualifications thus to be valued—although for Meinong, of course, an existence-judgment is presupposed. They also both agree that the valuation of extrinsic values necessarily involves a certain ratiocinative process, although here again Meinong insists upon an existence judgment as additional presupposition, thus involving both a primary and a secondary presuppositional judgment. In a certain sense this secondary judgment is really a primary presuppositional judgment applied to the existence, not of the object as a whole, but of its special qualifications to be a value object.

If both investigators agree that their theories envisage two different types of valuation process, perhaps the outstanding differences between them can be subsumed under these recognized differences. Do these considerable *rapprochements* furnish the basis for a unified definition of value? Let us commence by accepting the feelings as fundamental for all cases of intrinsic value, all cases, that is, where the value is *esteemed*, is *prized*, not as being good for something else, but just as being good, as satisfying, in itself. Each of us knows what are for him intrinsic values—even though they may be inexplicable, inarticulate, and incommunicable to others. All would agree that the experience of intrinsic valuation is permeated with feeling and emotional overtones.

We can make a similar assumption with regard to extrinsic values, namely, that here it is desire rather than feeling which is fundamental. Ehrenfels has agreed to some extent with Meinong's assertion that I can desire only that which is absent. A better way of stating this would seem to be that I can desire an extrinsic value only so long as *its intrinsic value* is absent; whether the extrinsic value itself is absent or not is of less significance. If the extrinsic value is absent, then naturally my first interests and activities are directed to acquiring it, as being mediate to the acquirement of the intrinsic value. If it is already present, or comes into my possession, then my interest (desire) shifts at once to the intrinsic value, as being the absent value I hope to acquire by means of the now-present

extrinsic value. As soon as the intrinsic value itself is acquired, then desire gives way immediately to feeling. Meinong has put this very neatly when he says:

"Desire is destroyed just as soon as Judgment takes the place of Assumption . . ."

Thus we see that feeling is the general characteristic of values which are present and desire of values that are absent. This coincides with what little we know of the psychology of feelings and desires; the feelings are essentially "internal" phenomena involving changes in glandular secretions and organic functioning, but involving very little overt voluntary activity—although particularly violent feelings may inhibit such activity or change its character. And at least one outstanding characteristic of desire is that it involves—as Ehrenfels has well demonstrated—overt muscular activity which may range from random spasmodic restlessness to direct ideomotor action.

The psychological characteristics are in keeping with the nature respectively of intrinsic and extrinsic values. When one possesses an intrinsic value he confines his activity to such behavior as will tend to heighten the stimuli which he receives from it; he "caresses" it, "fondles" it, "plays with it"; if it be a new food delicacy he "rolls it around his tongue" or sips it very slowly. If it be a new picture he is content to sit and gaze at it, or study it minutely. In all of this, emotion is present directly and as it were in its own right. All of our activity is primarily directed to increasing the vividness and reinforcing the certainty of the judgment that we do possess what we want.

Desires, on the other hand, are typically active in their manifestations; they do not let us rest in blissful contemplation. Even if we know that the object is utterly unattainable, the wish for it is not as quiescent as the happy emotions we have just described; it is essentially an inner tension which would instantly stimulate overt activity if the reason could only point the way to go with any likelihood of attaining the object.

If we tabulate all of these characteristics of the two types of value, we shall be able to compare them more easily.

EXTRINSIC VALUES: INTRINSIC VALUES:

1. <i>Defined in terms of:</i>	Desire	Feeling
2. <i>Typical existence status of object:</i>	Absent	Present
3. <i>Primary presuppositional judgment (existence):</i>	Non-essential	Essential
4. <i>Secondary presuppositional judgment (quale):</i>	Essential	Non-essential
5. <i>Behavior of value subject:</i>	Overt, Tropicistic	Quiescent, Contemplative

It will be noted that on the whole the first column of this table, descriptive of the extrinsic values, is almost a faithful reproduction of the total value definition of Ehrenfels, whereas the second column represents the definition of Meinong with almost equal fidelity. We must conclude our attempt to find a definition of value with the confession that there is no such definition, or rather that there must be at least two such definitions, depending upon whether one has reference to extrinsic or intrinsic values. It is not surprising that Meinong, who was primarily interested in abstract analysis, in the theory of knowledge, in axiology, should have found a definition which fits most closely the intrinsic values; whereas Ehrenfels, who began his investigations with a study of the will, and who continued with the study of the psychology of motivation, should have thought of values essentially from their extrinsic aspect.

To recognize that both types of definition of value have their place in any well-rounded theory of value is better than to attempt to force either definition into subservience to the other, or to try to formulate some broad definition which, while it does no violence to either moment in the total value situation, does not help us very much to carry our investigations further. It must be admitted, however, that the latter seems to be the more recent tendency, especially as manifested in Urban's definition of values as "funded affective-volitional meanings," or Perry's definition of values as "any object of any interest." The attempt to discover the wider implications for value theory

of the approach here indicated must be left to some other work not strictly historical and critical in its character.

Extrinsic Values and Intrinsic Values

These definitions and distinctions will never serve to guide us into any ultimately valid classification of the extrinsic and intrinsic values as such, for, as both Meinong and Ehrenfels have indefatigably insisted, there is no such classification possible. Extrinsic and intrinsic values are continually shifting one into the other, and very often the same object may be both an extrinsic, and also an intrinsic good. In so far as one can experience pleasure at the possession or in the existence of what is extrinsic to another value, this object constitutes itself an intrinsic value. And when one who has been in the pursuit of some extrinsic value finally desists and "lets well enough alone" we may say that this point, as compared to the point to which other persons engaged on a similar undertaking under similar conditions would continue their efforts, measures his (relative) intrinsic valuation of the good of which he was in search. We may, perhaps, think of intrinsic goods as a series of inclusions, like Chinese boxes, such that the inner and more difficult ones to attain are the intrinsic goods of higher order, whereas the more outer values are really merely extrinsic to the inner.¹⁸ The effort of extracting these inner goods is a measure of their value; some people will be satisfied with relatively "coarse," crude, external or superficial goods, to be secured with the expenditure of very little persistent effort; others will not be satisfied so easily and will penetrate beneath these exterior and mediate goods to that which is attainable only with greater effort.

Since intrinsic values are generally more difficult of attainment than extrinsic values, there has arisen a natural tendency to identify difficulty of attainment with intrinsic worth; as e.g., to insist that virtue must be painful and hard, and that if it is pleasant it is evil. This is evidently a fallacy. In cases

¹⁸. Cf. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 223.

where the intrinsic value is contingent upon extrinsic values the difficulty of attainment *measures* the attained intrinsic value—it never constitutes it.

In the interrelation of intrinsic and extrinsic values lies the paradox of valuation, or more properly the paradox of motivation. Should one choose extrinsic or intrinsic values? Without the former the latter seldom can exist; without the latter, the former are valueless. As the poet complains,

“Alas, what boots it, with incessant care . . .”

It is the problem of the man in the New Testament parable who knew not when to desist from raising hogs that he might buy more land to grow more corn, to build bigger barns, so that he might raise still more hogs . . . “Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be demanded of thee.” The obvious emptiness of such a mere round of extrinsic values tends to enhance the charm of any proffered intrinsic values, whether their claims be valid or not.

The paradox of valuation arises from the fact that the typical reaction to intrinsic values is quiescent, the absorbed enjoyment of the good as such, whereas the extrinsic value mediate to an intrinsic value demands energetic activity, the pursuit of the absent good. That there are divergent and even conflicting ways of “solving” the paradox does not eliminate the paradox as such. Thus one may, with Diogenes of Sinope, so restrict the list of intrinsic values that they give rise to relatively few and easily acquired extrinsic values, so that “Stand out of my sun” may be all that one would ask of Alexander. Or one may be so enamored of the endless pursuit of extrinsic goods that this pursuit itself becomes, by “value movement,” an intrinsic good, and thus there ceases to be conflict between the two, a case best illustrated by the American millionaire who still continues energetically in the pursuit of wealth which must long since have ceased to have any significance whatever as extrinsic good, or the miser, who continues the acquisition of extrinsic goods in the belief that they are intrinsic.

All such attempted solutions hinge ultimately upon questions of fact. The empirical theory of value must indeed continue its investigations until all claims and all programs, no matter how intriguing or tempting they may be, have been submitted to this test. The complete analysis of values calls not merely for the study of the subjective mechanism and process of valuation—to which we have devoted the present and the preceding chapters—but also the study of the objective world, as world of values, to which the subject relates himself in the course of his valuation. To this latter problem we shall devote the remaining chapters of the present study.

CHAPTER NINE

False Values and True Values

IX

FALSE VALUES AND TRUE VALUES

IN TURNING our attention from the purely psychological mechanism of valuation to the world of values in which this mechanism operates, there are naturally two questions of primary importance.

(1) Is the psychological equipment which stands at our disposal for the exploration of this world of values capable of rendering true judgments about it? Can we detect that it ever commits errors in the process of valuation? In short, are there imaginary (deceptive) values? Involved in this question is the possibility of determining the source of such errors in valuation as we detect; determining, that is, which of the factors that we have seen are active in the process of valuation is most liable to cause an error in valuation.

(2) Even if we find that the process of valuation, so far at least as the ascertainment of true value is concerned, is much like the process of judgment (intellectual knowledge of the world), so that we can with some propriety speak of an axiological knowledge comparable to a logical knowledge, we would still be faced with another and ancient problem: the problem of knowledge as such. We have already seen that the new empiricism regards this problem from a novel viewpoint: It refuses to concede that we are immured in an ego-centric predicament, from which we could extricate ourselves only by appeal to mysticism. It views the problem of knowledge as simply one of many empirical problems, to be settled by making full use of the recent advances of modern scientific methodology such as the theory of probabilities. It does not hope for a final settlement of this problem, but it does hope to prevent a final debacle of philosophical investigation. From our viewpoint, however, the chief interest lies not in this general

problem of knowledge as such, but rather in the subordinate question as to whether the problem of axiological knowledge has any unique aspects which might destroy the hope of acquiring truth and knowledge with respect to values. This problem is the relation between the theory of knowledge and the theory of value.

Imaginary Values

Whether there are imaginary values hinges upon the question whether the *value judgment* as judgment resembles the *truth judgment*. One of the outstanding characteristics of the latter is that it is capable of error. In the case of the judgment of value, if there can be error then it is clear that this error presupposes some absolute or final scale of values in terms of which the error occurs. This question may seem ambiguous unless one clearly distinguishes its two subordinate problems; i.e., (1) whether there are intrinsic values which are ultimately absolute and final in some transcendental sense, beyond human change or criticism, and (2) whether there are any intrinsic values which, while falling short of any such finality as this, can still claim to be regarded as being essentially intrinsic values, good in and for themselves, and more ultimate than other values. We have hitherto employed the terms intrinsic and absolute values interchangeably, but we may now agree that values coming under (1) above are absolute, and those under (2) are to be designated as intrinsic, or intrinsic in the narrower sense.

Brentano was primarily concerned with the former aspect of the problem, as we have seen, and endeavored to set up a more or less dialectical proof, in his *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis*, that there were intrinsic values of almost the same validity as the self-evident truth judgments of logic. His argument was, however, in the last analysis analogical, and he was able to do little more with this problem than call it to the attention of his students. He was interested in a special practical problem—whether the legal code of values could be abstractly justified—and he investigated the problem of absolute values only so far as he found this consonant with his

immediate purpose. Nevertheless he found that he could not solve his problem without such a study of the general value theory as served to mark it off as a separate field of psychological investigation.

Meinong treats of this problem in his *Untersuchungen* in a chapter entitled "Werthaltung und Wert," although, as fundamental to this discussion, he has already made it clear that value is not strictly contingent upon the momentary emotional situation, but demands for its complete determination "favorable circumstances." It is a matter of common knowledge that many things can be or have been valued in the history of culture which had no "true" value whatever; old and new superstitions might be cited as examples of this, just as many things which are of real value never have been and perhaps are not even now valued.¹ Thus I may imagine that a twig is a wishing-rod, and if my valuation is directed to the twig it may be positive although the real value of the twig is negligible. That there is an error here is patent, but the question is as to whether this is an error in the chief presuppositional judgment or in the secondary presuppositional judgment, or perhaps is to be found in the feeling concomitant of the value judgment.²

If it is the chief presuppositional judgment which is in error, then it is clear that we are not dealing with an error in valuation at all, but simply with an error of fact. If, for instance, I am delighted that a certain influential man has taken up the cudgels for a righteous cause, when as a matter of fact this is not the case, it is simply a case of my being misinformed. This is not, then, what would normally be called an error in valuation. Turning to the possibility that the error, if there be such, arises in the feeling or emotional concomitant of the value judgment, an imaginary or an erroneous value may seem to be a self-contradiction. If I have a feeling which accompanies a presuppositional judgment of the existence of the object of the feeling, is there any sense in saying that this

1. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 24.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 68f.

is erroneous? Viewed from the standpoint of the psychology of the emotions it is clear that I have that very feeling, and that from it arises the value judgment. As a mere statement of fact so much is true; or if it be false then the falsity comes in through my belief that I had a feeling which I do not have. It must be admitted, then, that there cannot be question of error in respect to the feeling concomitant of the value judgment.

There remains only the secondary presuppositional judgment to investigate; in the case which Meinong cites in the beginning of his discussion the value error of valuing the twig as wishing-rod arises not in the primary judgment as to the existence of the twig as twig, but in the secondary judgment as to the properties of the twig. Meinong does not attempt to illustrate all possible types of cases but he does mention four essentially different situations in order that one may appreciate the complexity of the subject. (1) I honor a man because he seems to me to be an ideal person, although actually he does not possess the qualities for which I honor him. (2) One may accept too implicitly the judgment of others as to "what is done" and "what is not done." In this case, of course, the value error is contingent upon error in the judgments of the "others." (3) A simple person who has acquired great respect for culture may make the error of supposing that all people who wear formal dress are cultured, and may thus value someone who lacks the essential culture of which he wears the livery. (4) Or a sick person, either incurably sick or suffering from imaginary ills, may think himself cured by bread-pills, and in the former case may even die "cured." All of these cases satisfy Meinong's definition of value judgment, but it is evident that there is an error involved in them; the error is of such a nature that it is patent to any well-informed and disinterested person, and is in no sense indicative of an absolute value. In so far, then, as one may submit the secondary presuppositional judgments to some sort of objective or over-personal test, one may say that there is such a thing as objective value. Meinong, in the interest of tolerance, insists that the assumption that another who does not value

as I do is *ipso facto* either uninformed or unintelligent is really a sign of narrowness, and has no significance for the question of value error. Nevertheless there is a certain truth in the assertion that the boor who estimates the value of *objets d'art* in terms of their cost or the sportsman who turns a perfectly innocent and healthful recreation into a vocation (unless it be for purely economic reasons) is "missing the point." Meinong, like Brentano, stands firmly on the ground that value theory cannot permit the *de gustibus* to bar investigation.

We may classify the four typical cases of value error which Meinong cites somewhat as follows: The first and third are essentially similar in that they are cases where the value-subject persuades himself that a certain thing is of value to him because of a valuable part of the complex whole which either is lacking in the particular instance or was always lacking, although present in similar instances; the second and fourth cases really consist in allowing others to persuade us either of the intrinsic value of a certain complex whole or of the existence in it of certain causal connections which prove non-existent. In some cases we may so persuade ourselves. It is clear that these secondary judgments in which the error occurs are what we might call "subordinate primary judgments"; i.e., judgments which concern not the characteristics of a certain part of the complex whole, but rather the *existence* of these characteristics. If, then, they are from this viewpoint essentially the same as the primary presuppositional judgments, it would seem that any error in them is no more a *value* error than when the error occurs in the primary presuppositional judgment itself; it is simply an error of fact.

Ehrenfels reserves the term "value error" for the most part to cases where alone, according to his theory, an error in the strict sense of the term—i.e., an error in judgment—is possible, namely, to cases of extrinsic values.³ This sort of error might better be described simply as an error in judgment or an error in fact, rather than an error in value.

³. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," i, p. 100.

Ehrenfels does insist, however, that over and above these cases there are instances where one can say that an "imaginary" value has been assigned to an object which is relatively valueless. He cites three typical cases: (1) The object which is desired is part of a larger whole and one thinks that it is another part of the same whole that one desires; as, e.g., one enjoys living in a certain city because of his childhood memories which are intimately associated with it, although one assigns this pleasure to appreciation of the excellent architecture of the public buildings and the general character of the inhabitants. This is very similar to the third of the four typical cases cited by Meinong in that, if there is an error in the valuation at all it comes from assigning value to a complex whole because it possesses certain attributes which are thought to be the source of the value although the value really flows from quite other attributes which may or may not be present in the particular case. In the form in which Ehrenfels cites it, the error might not be in the valuation at all, but in the assignment of the source of the value, although this false assignment of source might easily lead to a real value error in Meinong's sense of the term. (2) One thinks that he desires something for itself alone, when he really desires it as means to some other end; or (3) the opposite error of thinking that one values something as means to something else when one really enjoys it for itself alone.

In a later discussion Ehrenfels adds the possibility that one may be in error as to the existence of a certain *valuation* and hence of the value dependent on it. If this error is as to the existence of a valuation in the mind of another person, then it is hardly an error in value, but merely another error in fact. But when it is an error as to one's own valuations, then it can be called a value error.⁴ Thus one may for the time being be satiated with a certain type of food, and be unable to form the desire for it, although—on the basis of its general desirability—he may "value" it, believing that he will come to desire it again. But if this proves not to be the case, then

⁴ Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 104.

he has deceived himself as to his own "desire disposition," and is liable to an error in valuation. Nor is this temporal change in desire dispositions the only possible source of this type of imaginary value; one can, for instance, go to a concert thinking that he enjoys the music when he really goes because he likes to "be seen" at concerts, and thus he deceives himself as to his real desire dispositions. This is really a confusion between the supposed value of one effect of a given cause when one really values another effect of the same cause.

One may say, then, that at the most the sources for a real value error are exceedingly scarce, and most of the cases of what are habitually so designated turn out to be merely error in fact or error in judgment. As exceptions to this we have cases of value error traceable to change in desire dispositions or some form of error in the assignment of the source of the value; the former of these two exceptions, while preserving the possibility of value error reduces values as such to a position of utter subjectivity; the latter is at most but a step removed from the value errors which are merely errors in judgment, for an assignment of the source of a value is itself a form of judgment.

That there are so few sources of value error does not mean that there is an increased probability of absolute values but rather diminishes it, for as we have seen errors are to be taken as indicative of the existence of a standard in terms of which the error is determined. On the other hand, that most of the sources of value error that we have investigated are to be traced to judgments relative to the extrinsic aspects of values does not mean that there is apt to be a scale of absolute extrinsic values, because we already possess in the norms of correct logical or scientific thinking the standard in terms of which these errors are determined, and, therefore, they prove to be not value errors in the strict sense of the term at all, but errors of fact or judgment. Finally, there are a few cases which Ehrenfels names "changes in desire disposition" and which Meinong mentions as "whimsicality"—as for instance where one values object O_1 because it possesses

characteristic X and refuses to value the similar object O_2 even though it also possesses X.⁵ These indicate that we all expect a certain consistency and stability to the value-systems of individuals and consider any lapse from this as an error. Whether these whimsicalities and changes of disposition are constitutive of value errors must be reserved for further discussion until we can investigate the factors of the moral judgment.

Meinong, in his later work, tends to favor a theory of over-personal values in order to escape the strict relativism of his theory of personal values to which we have so far confined our attention. For instance in his Bologna address he offered the following definition:

. . . The value of an O subsists in the fact that an S takes an interest in the O, could take an interest in the O, or even reasonably should take an interest.⁶

He immediately comes to the heart of his argument in this address, from which it takes its title, when he insists that to regard any such assertion as a denial of the psychological theory of value on which it is based is an "unjustifiable psychologism," comparable to the attempt to solve the problems of epistemology or object theory with psychological methods. And he does not hesitate to admit that this position must be regarded as standing nearer to Brentano's theory of "the rightly to be loved" than he himself would have admitted at an earlier date. In fact a little later he adopts Brentano's terminology almost *verbatim* when he says that an object has value not merely because it has gained the interest of a subject, but rather "in so far as it deserves this interest."⁷ The rest of his article is devoted to repeating his caution against carrying this new view over into a purely unpsychological and over-personal theory of values. He does not, however, in this article, cite any values which might fairly

⁵ Meinong, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

⁶ Meinong, "Für die Psychologie . . .," *Logos*, III, p. 9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

and properly be regarded as over-personal values, or absolute in any philosophical sense. This he does first six years later when he writes in 1917,

One speaks of good and poor taste in art, of sensitive and callous conscience in matters of ethics, and grants without excluding the possibility of hypersensitivity that the more sensitive conscience is in general right. Similarly one would say that man was wrong who in the conflict between personal comfort and high cultural goods, e.g., the honor of the war-pressed Fatherland, would choose the former.⁸

Again Meinong calls attention to the similarity between this view and that of Brentano, although he turns immediately to an investigation as to whether this similarity is more apparent than real. In so doing he points out that self-evidence is of significance as a justification of a knowledge experience not because it is a peculiar sort of experience (contrary to what Brentano had said) but because it bears a special relation to actuality. This brings us face to face with the problem of epistemology; Meinong no longer tries to avoid it, but rather stakes the future of his theory of value upon his theory of knowledge. We cannot hope, therefore, to proceed much further with the former until we have seen something of the nature of the latter.

Theory of Knowledge and Theory of Value

Almost a decade had passed after the publication of his *Untersuchungen* before Meinong came to a full realization that his researches in these two fields in which his philosophical interests were chiefly engaged were drawing closer together and contributing to a unified view of values which marked a great advance over his previous value theory and permitted him to bring closer to solution many questions which had long vexed him.

Before we attempt to understand the significance of Meinong's theory of knowledge for his theory of value we must glance briefly at the former itself. We cannot, of course, hope

⁸. Meinong, "Ueber emotionale Präsentation," (1917) p. 120. (Reprint).

to understand all of the complexities of this theory in such a brief compass, but it is essential at least to realize that Meinong was convinced that in his object-theory he had contributed not merely a new theory of knowledge, but an entirely new science to the sum of human knowledge. The magnitude of the claim is lessened somewhat, and rendered more explicable, when he adds that much of this new science is simply a bringing together and renaming of much that had hitherto been scattered among other and older sciences such as mathematics and symbolic logic. The essence of the new science lies in his definition of it as the science of all that can be known of objects without paying regard to whether they exist or not. Thus, to cite an illustration, there are certain relations governing the colors that fill a surface regardless of what these colors may be, or of the empirical psychology of color vision. Object-theory, in short, studies existence-free objects; and in so doing it is not surprising that it also discovers other types of "being" in addition to physical existence, e.g., "subsistence" (*Bestehen*). Thus we can say that two colors exist, but the difference between these colors does not exist, it subsists; the number of books in a library does not exist over and above the existence of the books themselves; it subsists, etc.⁹

We have already seen that certain epistemological questions have always lain at the heart of Meinong's theory of value; his solution of these questions had at first been largely determined by the influence of Brentano. But he had no hesitation in abandoning those parts of the foundation which Brentano had laid which were no longer serviceable to him. That which he here sacrifices is Brentano's classification of the psychic phenomena; this involves two steps: The first was the redivision of the "faculties" into four instead of Brentano's three (i.e., idea, judgment, feeling, and desire), a division which we find mentioned casually in the *Untersuchungen* although it does not become prominent in his thought until his later writings. The second step is the refusal to restrict the psychological

⁹ Meinong, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellung*, pp. 112ff.

function of "presentation" to idea (as Brentano had done). Instead, presentation is "complete" (*fertig*) only when it is the product of the judgment.

It was through the investigations of one of his own students, Stephan Witasek, that Meinong came to a realization of the importance of this new approach to values, and particularly of the new outlook on the presuppositions of value judgments. As long as he held that presentation was preëminently the function of idea, this aspect of his theory could not develop. But Witasek pointed out that there were certain types of emotion, of special importance in æsthetics, which might be designated "fantasy feelings" (*Phantasiegefühle*), and so Meinong tried¹⁰ to introduce them into his general theory of assumptions by asserting that they played a rôle with respect to real emotions analogous to that played by the assumptions proper with respect to judgment, so that just as the assumptions are found "between" idea and judgment, just so the fantasy feelings are found between idea and emotion. Witasek had defined these feelings as being essentially like any other emotions except that instead of a judgment as presupposition they had assumptions, and with this definition Meinong found it necessary to differ, in spite of the fact that it would seem to be supported by Brentano's general principle of parsimony. One case which Meinong cites in contradiction to this theory is the fantasy feelings based on the memory of a toothache, in which case it is certainly not assumption which serves as presupposition of the emotion. But even though Meinong finds it necessary on these empirical grounds to reject Witasek's definition, he does not refuse to admit that some emotions can have assumptions instead of judgments as presuppositions, although it was some years before he was ready to broaden this concept to include still other types of presupposition.

This influence comes again to the surface when he was concerned in the elaboration of his theory of judgment, in his article "Ueber Urteilsgefühle." In this article he reverts for the most part to his earlier theory that the judgment furnishes

¹⁰ Meinong, *Ueber Annahmen*, pp. 309f. (1910).

the presupposition of the value emotion, and he analyzes here in considerable detail the characteristics of these judgments along the lines of his object-theory. For instance, he points out that this judgment need not be in all cases an existence judgment, as seems to have been the sole possibility offered in the *Untersuchungen*, but may, on occasion, be a disjunctive judgment, as when I am happy at the knowledge that either my friend A or my friend B is to receive a certain appointment.¹¹ Or again it may be that a qualificative judgment (*Soseinsurteil*) serves as presupposition, as when I am happy not only that two such men as Goethe and Schiller should have lived but also that they were friends.

He confines his attention, however, at first to the existence judgment, and makes clear that even when we know what the judgment is and what its object is we still do not possess an adequate description of the judgment emotion, the valuation, for we do not know the attitude of the *subject* toward the object of the judgment; thus a small boy may be happy over his steam engine and unhappy over the school. This difference is analogous to the difference in attitude which characterizes judgments themselves, for the judgment of the theist with regard to God has God as its object no more and no differently than does that of the atheist, so far as the judgment *quâ* judgment is concerned, although the two men differ markedly in their *attitude* toward this object. Returning to the judgment feeling itself, in the case of the existence judgment this question of attitude can be expressed by saying that the subject has a feeling of happiness or unhappiness having an affirmative or negative judgment concerning its own object as presupposition. Meinong concedes that although this may be a correct psychological analysis it does not describe what the person himself normally feels, or intends to convey with the words "I am happy over . . ." This judgment itself has no direct effect on this feeling whatever, but is buried beneath it as a "presupposition," and normally does not even come to consciousness.

¹¹ Meinong, "Ueber Urteilsgefühle," pp. 28f.

Thus for the purposes of psychological analysis no one can object if we go on and say that what the boy who says that he is happy over his steam engine really means is, that he is happy over the *existence* of his steam engine. If this is the case, it is the phrase "that the steam engine exists" that is the real presupposition of the value judgment; we are, then, dealing here with exactly the same concepts that form one of the principal objects of investigation in Meinong's *Ueber Annahmen* and in his epistemological studies in general—for this type of phrase is what Meinong designates as an "objective," an object-like substantive which he classifies as "an object of higher order." Objectives as treated in epistemology have, however, a certain quality which is not true of them when they serve as presuppositions in value theory. Thus I can form the judgment "that the meadows are green," and this objective contains in a certain sense within itself the objects "meadows" and "green," which can function as the objects of more elementary judgments such as "the meadows exist" or "I see green." But if I am happy over the fact "that the meadows are green" one cannot similarly break up this objective into the individual objects meadows and green, over which I am happy in a more elementary way. Meinong cautions, however, against the too hasty assumption that therefore all of our valuations are directed toward objectives rather than objects, owing to the fact that the latter have long since been customarily accepted as the true sources of valuation. This is of course essentially a terminological question and Meinong wishes to avoid being arbitrary with regard to it. Thus one might place value on the fact "that his watch runs correctly," and in this case it would seem to be almost impossible to phrase this objective so that the value would seem to be dependent directly upon or to inhere directly in an object merely as such; it is an object qualified by its mode of functioning.

At this point a suggestion which he found in the work of Witasek again furnishes him a clue for a valuable distinction which may serve to clarify the nature of the presuppositions of value judgments. Witasek had suggested that just as there

were certain value feelings which were based on pleasant sensations, so also there were certain knowledge-value-feelings (*Wissenswertgefühle*) based on the knowledge feelings which Meinong had discussed in the *Untersuchungen*. In view of the fact that Meinong's value theory is essentially a presuppositional theory it would seem to be an embarrassment for his theory, as he says, that the same judgment should serve as the presupposition both for knowledge-value-feelings and also for value feelings proper.¹² He avoids this difficulty by making use of another distinction which was later to become of primary importance in his further development of value theory—a distinction which clearly springs from his own object theory, although he gives credit to Witasek for calling attention to it in this connection. This is the distinction between the two aspects of any judgment, its "act" and its "content" aspect. He defines the content as that part of the judgment which varies concomitantly with variations of the objective, whereas the act is then that part of the judgment which does not thus vary concomitantly with variations of the objective, but rather with variations in the attitude of the subject. Thus a change in the content of the objective "that Henry Smith is alive" would be effected by changing it to "that William Jones is alive." A change in the act would be effected by changing the affirmation that Henry Smith is alive to the denial that Henry Smith is alive. It is obvious that whereas knowledge-value-feelings can well be indifferent to the content aspect of their presupposition, value feelings proper hinge absolutely (as far as the "attitude of the subject" which they express is concerned) on changes in this content aspect.

Presuppositions of value feelings as such are based on the psychological function of "presentation" which we have seen to be fundamental in the system of Brentano. Meinong grants that hitherto one had almost universally assigned the function of presentation to the ideational faculty, in accordance with a usage which has never been adequately criticized; he therefore turns to investigate the question whether any such exclusive

¹². *Ibid.*, p. 39.

assignment is justifiable. Thus, just as the idea "presents" objects, so the judgment and the assumption present objectives, in the sense in which we have defined them above. And in each case we have not only "self-presentation" (the being conscious of one's own intimate inner experiences) but also "other-presentation" which is directed outward. Thus we can have an imaginary emotional experience which is partial-other-presentation when it makes us conscious of an emotion which we once had but no longer have; our emotional experience is total-other-presentation when it gives us a feeling as to what is in the mind of another, as in sympathy, intuition, and other cases where we can realize that the other is experiencing something we have also experienced—although with unique differences which make our own total-other-presentation something else than merely an associative memory image.

In keeping with this analysis it is not difficult for us, Meinong suggests, to describe the experiences as "outwardly directed emotions" when we find a temperature pleasant, a melody beautiful, a tool or an act good. Having thus defined his terms, Meinong tries to justify the capacity of emotions to "present" objects of higher order to us, by a sort of epistemological *tu quoque*:

Without doubt the capacity of the emotions as media of knowledge falls far behind that of ideas; but one has learned to evaluate the subjectivity and general untrustworthiness of the sensations more and more, and now quite enough to permit a closer approach to the concept of a merely quantitative difference between the emotions and the sensations [as means of knowledge], rather than a qualitative difference;¹³

so far, at least, as capacity to present objects is concerned. Thus there would seem to be fundamentally less difference between the expressions "the temperature is pleasant" and "the temperature is high," or between the expressions "the sky is beautiful" and "the sky is blue," than has normally been thought to be the case.

If this is so, then just as ideas and judgments present their objects and objectives, of lower or higher degree as the case

¹³ Meinong, "Für die Psychologie . . .," p. 10.

may be, so also there must be objects of higher order which are presented by the emotions, as well as by the desires.

This epistemological basis of value theory is presented in much more elaborate and complete a form in "Ueber emotionale Präsentation"; and here his first task is to substantiate his right to such concepts as "presentation" and "objective" in spite of Occam's razor. His defense of presentation is that undoubtedly in the case of ideas it is a superfluous concept, for the formation of the idea of an object is the operation of presenting it. There are, however, many cases where presentation as such can occur but where it is impossible to form an idea of the object, cases which he designates as objectives.¹⁴ Thus one might suggest that one can form the idea of cat and of black, but not of the phrase, "that the cat is black." He, and other thinkers with him, had hitherto for the most part restricted the concept of presentation to the intellectual or judgmental sphere, and even the passage from the Logos article quoted just above does not go very far toward extending this usage. It is the purpose of "Ueber emotionale Präsentation" to extend this concept definitely to the emotional sphere.

The first extension beyond the narrow limits posited by Brentano comes in Meinong's insistence that we do not need to form an idea of a psychological phenomenon occurring in our own minds in order to be conscious of it ("self-presentation"), and he calls to his support a citation from Brentano's *Psychologie* which might well be interpreted in favor of such an extension, although it is somewhat in disagreement with the passage in which Brentano summarized his whole theory, to the effect that it was impossible for a psychological phenomenon to exist in us without our having an idea of it. This sort of presentation is what he defines specifically as self-presentation in contradistinction to other-presentation. Whether or not one could finally insist that all intellectual phenomena are presented by ideas, certainly one must say that this is not the case with the self-presentation of emotional phenomena, for when I experience an emotion it would be twisting words too

¹⁴. Meinong, "Ueber emotionale Präsentation," p. 4.

far from their normal signification to say that this emotion, in so far as it serves to present this phenomenon to me, is an idea. For emotions are very easily distinguishable from ideas. Meinong insists that in spite of the evident difficulties in the way of introspection and analysis of one's own inner experiences, when I have a toothache or some other similar feeling of happiness or unhappiness, I know that I have it without necessarily forming an idea of it, and I know it as a toothache, and not as the idea of a toothache.

Meinong then digresses to a discussion of the epistemological character of certain objectives, but soon returns to the epistemological aspects of values when he suggests the possibility of qualifying all "other-presentation" as content-presentation, in view of the fact that when I am conscious of the intellectual or emotional phenomena which either were in my own mind at some previous time or are in the mind of another person now, it is only the content of which I can be conscious, or so it would seem at a superficial glance. The extension of this terminology, however, so that the self-presentation should be defined as act-presentation, although it is that presentation where alone the act as such takes part, breaks down in that in the case of self-presentation one is also conscious of the content of the particular phenomenon. He contents himself, therefore, with defining those presentations in which the content alone is concerned as partial presentations, in opposition to total presentations where the act also functions in the presentation. One must not conclude from this, however, that all "other-presentation" is partial presentation, for, in the case of one's memory of a past emotional event in his own life, the past act functions in the presentation, and thus this constitutes a case of other-total-presentation.¹⁵

These terminological distinctions, however important they may be for the full development of Meinong's epistemological theory, will have served their purpose if they make it clear to us what Meinong has in mind in insisting that the emotions

¹⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

and desires can serve as well as the purely intellectual phenomena of idea and judgment in the presentation of objectives to consciousness. He grants that his theory is quite opposed to the philosophical tradition and the accepted views of psychologists, but this cannot serve as a refutation of it. We must not forget that these terminological distinctions are primarily heuristic, and having made himself clear with regard to them, and to their bearing on his general epistemological theory, Meinong turns to the consideration of their implications in the later developments of his value theory.

One of the most significant of these later developments is the reclassification of the emotions based on the character of their presuppositions. He begins with the presuppositions which are either ideational or judgmental, and thus classifies emotions as idea-feelings or judgment-feelings. Furthermore the emotions may be based either on the act aspect or the content aspect of their presuppositional idea or judgment. If we combine these two disjunctions into a cross classification of the emotions we have a fourfold classification of the following character:¹⁶

WHEN THE PRESUPPOSITION Is:	EMOTIONS BASED ON THE "ACT-ASPECT": (ACT-EMOTIONS)	EMOTIONS BASED ON THE "CONTENT-ASPECT": (CONTENT-EMOTIONS)
<i>An Idea:</i>	Hedonic feelings	Aesthetic feelings
<i>A Judgment:</i>	Knowledge feelings	Value feelings proper

When Meinong tries next to see whether the distinction between assumption and judgment (analogous to the distinction in ideas between imaginary and genuine ideas) can serve as a further basis of classification, he speedily reaches the conclusion that just as assumptions are excluded from serving as the presuppositions of knowledge emotions—for who would be pleased with "imaginary knowledge"?—so also imaginary ideas

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 86f, 93.

cannot serve as the presuppositions of the hedonic emotions, presumably because one cannot experience a sensuous thrill of any sort over an imaginary pleasure; at the best it is an imaginary value judgment. But this imaginary type of presupposition is possible for the two content emotions: the æsthetic and the value feelings. We have seen that assumptions are implicit in every complete valuation, for it is not adequate to describe them (as Meinong had done in his *Untersuchungen*) simply as existence feelings; in the first place this would eliminate the possibility of "subsistence feelings" and hence the possibility of an objective serving as the presupposition of a value, for objectives do not exist, they subsist. In the second place every complete valuation involves both the feeling which has the existence of the object as presupposition and also that having the non-existence. At any given time one or the other (if not both) of these must be based on assumption, and thus assumptions are inevitably involved in valuation. And it is also clear that æsthetic feelings are essentially the same whether their object is real or imaginary, for one seldom stops to inquire, upon admiring a beautiful picture, how faithful a reproduction it is of the "subject," albeit there is a special art of portraiture.

Meinong suggests that these two types of content emotions (value and æsthetic feelings) may very well be distinguished from the act emotions on the grounds of the possibility of basing them on imaginary presuppositions; he thus defines the value and æsthetic feelings as those which are possibly imaginary feelings. There is, however, a distinction between them that when the assumptions are the sole presuppositions of the opposed feelings making up the total *value* feeling we do not have a real value feeling but only an imaginary one, whereas in the case of the *æsthetic* feelings we should still have a real æsthetic feeling. Thus value feelings are to be defined as essentially ontological (*Seinsgefühle*) even when the existence feeling is directed toward a purely qualificative objective (e.g., "that my watch runs correctly") whereas the æsthetic feelings are essentially qualificative feelings (*Soseinsgefühle*).¹⁷

¹⁷. *Ibid.*, pp. 89ff.

This is as far as Meinong is able to carry his classification of the emotions on the basis of purely intellectual presuppositions. But, as we have seen, in his later work he abandons the theory that all presuppositions are intellectual, for the emotions themselves, as well as desires, can also present objects. He now raises the terminological question as to whether these objects presented by the emotions are essentially similar to those of judgments, and hence to be called objectives also. In order to understand his answer it is necessary to note that the basis on which he distinguished in the first place between objects and objectives is that all objectives of whatever nature, whether based on judgments or assumptions, showed a fundamental and generic similarity, and differed universally from all objects, in the possession of a certain duality of nature, in that they were all qualified as positive or negative: existence or non-existence, belief or disbelief. There is also running through all the objects of higher order presented by the emotions a similar characteristic, which however is so fundamentally dissimilar from the characteristic of the objectives that we cannot possibly subsume them all under the same heading. In order to distinguish between the objects of emotion and those of the intellect, and particularly also to distinguish between the objects of feeling and those of desire, Meinong resorts to an analogical argument, and points out that just as the objectives of judgments necessarily involve as their logical *prius* the objects of ideas, so also the objects of desire involve the objects of feeling, for one desires only that which has value or which arouses in him an emotion.¹⁸ If, then, there is a fundamental difference between objectives and objects, then there would seem to be an equally fundamental difference between these last two classes of objects of higher order. He therefore suggests that we call the objects of feeling "dignitatives," and those of desire "desideratives." This leads to a general classification of all of these objects of higher order as follows:¹⁹

¹⁸. *Ibid.*, pp. 111f.

¹⁹. *Ibid.*, p. 113. Cf. Meinong, *Zur Grundlegung*, p. 158.

1. The idea (and the imagination) present *objects*, which exist (*Sein*).
2. The judgment (and the assumptions) present *objectives*, which subsist (*Bestehen*).
3. The feelings (and the imaginary feelings) present *dignitatives*, which have worth (*Gelten*).
4. The desires (and the imaginary desires) present *desideratives* which ought to be (*Sollen*).

If we inquire into the nature of the dignitatives and desideratives it is necessary to revert to the fourfold classification given above (See p. 226). On the basis of this we can say that with regard to the dignitatives:²⁰

1. The hedonic feelings present the *pleasant*, or hedonically valuable.
2. The æsthetic feelings present the *beautiful*, or æsthetically valuable.
3. The knowledge feelings present the *true*, or logically valuable.
4. The value feelings present the *good*, or timologically (axiologically) valuable.

These four dignitatives, the pleasant, the beautiful, the true, and the good, can be said to represent value in its "broader" meaning; thus we can say that even though beauty is not a value, yet a beautiful object is valuable because of its beauty. Parallel with these dignitatives one ought to be able to find similarly four desideratives, of which, however, Meinong investigates in any detail only the two which are based on judgment: the judgment-act desiderative and the judgment-content desiderative; he recognizes that there are also similar desideratives based on ideas.²¹ Turning to the judgment-content desiderative he finds that it corresponds very closely to the value feelings proper, in that the emotion and the desire have the same presuppositional objective; the difference between them is simply in the fact that if the feeling has as presupposition an existence *judgment*, this feeling changes

²⁰. Meinong, "Für die Psychologie . . ." p. 11. Cf. Meinong, *Zur Grundlegung*, p. 156.

²¹. Meinong, "Ueber emotionale Präsentation," p. 100.

into the corresponding desire just as soon as the judgment becomes an assumption. The desire as such is again destroyed as soon as this assumption becomes a judgment.

The judgment-act desideratives bear a relation to the knowledge feelings analogous to that which, as we have just seen, the judgment-content desideratives bear to the value feelings, in that here also the two experiences have the same objective: in this case a certain judgment. There is, however, here an important distinction: whereas in the former case the objective was that which by its very presence destroyed the desire (by satisfying it), here this is not the case because either this objective or its contradictory opposite is capable of accomplishing this, for as we have seen above, the knowledge feelings are quite indifferent as to whether the knowledge on which they are based is affirmative or negative, a judgment of existence or non-existence. So also the desire for this knowledge is satisfied whether the answer be "yes" or "no." These knowledge desires may, for all practical purposes, be identified with what is generally called a "question," although they come more completely to expression in perfectly generalized dispositions to investigate and inquire, or in idle curiosity.

We ought not to bring the present chapter to a close without attempting at least a brief summary of Meinong's general value theory, although we must wait until later chapters of the present study for an occasion to study its relations to many problems within the general field. Meinong's own supreme effort at presenting his theory *in parvo* is undoubtedly the Logos article, where he looks upon value as an abstraction from all possible relationships of the valuing subject to the valued object; thus in any case the subject, S, values the object, O, under the circumstances U (*Umständen*) and when one has the occasion A (*Anlass*) so to do. Thus this particular value judgment is not only contingent upon the existence of the S, O, U, and A of this "total situation," but also upon the character of the judgment itself with which S relates itself to

O; i.e., as to whether the S *judges or assumes* that the O exists, does not exist, is capable of being desired, or is merely capable of being imagined.

Thus value is anything but subjective and relative to the individual or the particular situation. It is the duty of value theory to abstract from all of these real, subjective situations and on the basis of the broadest possible empirical inductions to discover what are the real values of life, the personal values, and the over-personal values. This raises rather specifically the question as to the extent to which empirical investigation has a part to play in value theory and to what extent this theory is essentially *a priori*. Meinong illustrates this point by reference to the same difficulty in exact science. Some investigators confine themselves to mechanics as a branch of pure mathematics, whereas others take these laws of mechanics into the laboratory and there subject them to empirical investigation. This is necessary, not merely to verify the mathematical theory, but also, even when there is little doubt as to its mathematical and mechanical correctness, to discover the "constants under zero conditions" without which the mathematical equations would be mere empty symbols, quite useless as guides to the prediction of physical phenomena.

Just so in value theory, it is the duty of the student of the purely theoretical science (which we may designate "axiology") to examine the interrelations of all of the possible value situations and factors—a task to which Meinong had devoted himself almost exclusively throughout most of his study of value theory—whereas the student of the empirical phenomena of value (which we may designate "timology") must discover just what things are valued under given conditions. If Meinong was primarily the student of axiology, it would not be straining a rough characterization too far to speak of Ehrenfels as essentially the student of timology, although we must wait until later portions of this study for the full vindication of the description. A more picturesque—if not misleading—way of characterizing these men from the viewpoint of their contributions to value theory and related fields of investigation

would be to say that if Brentano, by his valiant opposition to the modern sophism, has earned the right to the designation of the Austrian Socrates, so Meinong would certainly merit that of the Austrian Plato, and Ehrenfels that of the Austrian Aristotle. (It should be noted, in fairness to him, however, that Meinong objected strenuously to any confusion of his object-theory with Platonism.)

It is significant of the fundamentally empirical interests of the Second Austrian School that they devoted so much time, singly and collectively, to working out the methodology and the concepts which they were to employ in their investigations, to collecting data and comparing notes on disputed points, and to exploring all possible avenues of approach to their problem. As a result they left us very little in the way of a finished theory of value, very meager lists of "established values" and "codes valid for all." What we have in the works of all of these men is the skeleton of a science, the first sketch of a proposed attack on this citadel of truth—not the credo of a dogmatist or the *ipse dixit* of a metaphysician. In such an atmosphere further investigation can thrive.

In the light of what has been said it is not surprising that we must terminate this chapter on the possibilities of absolute values with very little comfort for those who demand of the theory of value a final canon of the good. Meinong agrees with Brentano in believing that such a canon may ultimately be derived, but except for the few meager examples we have cited he has little to offer by way of satisfying it. He is convinced that values are ultimately to be classed among his objects of higher order—for the statement that X is "beautiful" is fundamentally (from the viewpoint of object theory) more similar to the statement: X is "similar to" Y, than it is to the statement: X is blue. As he puts it: The characterization "beautiful" is more closely related in essence to the characterization "similar" than it is to the characterization "blue." In view of this, values, like relations, do not exist, they subsist; and hence they are subject to the rational and logical conditions of the world of subsistence rather than to the purely empirical determinations of the world of existence. Thus there is as little

doubt about the deductions and calculations of axiology as there is about the syllogisms of logic. As example of such a deduction he cites his definition of value in terms of the opposed feelings. But such results are at most merely regulative principles, empty forms which must be filled with the contents of actual value experiences. Meinong's fundamental empiricism perhaps never stood out more clearly than in a passage such as the following:

In sum, one finds thus, that certainty as to whether a given object is worthy of being valued or not is in no sense unattainable for us. Only, the *a priori* insights which the stuff under investigation might by its nature vouchsafe are as good as denied to us, except for what might be called divinatory approximations to it. On the contrary legitimate speculations, no matter how feeble, are permitted to us, which make it possible for us, building on our actual valuations and on the empirical experience which constitutes these, to pass over to stronger and stronger speculations, the more we generalize from the empirical experience in question and the more we make use of still wider indirect factors, exactly as in the experimental investigation of the world of fact.²²

This might well stand as the methodology to be used in the investigations of physics or astronomy.

With this we must leave the "general theory of value" in its strictest sense, and turn our attention to what the general theory has been able to determine with respect to some, at least, of the problems of practical value situations. Let us hope that our investigations into the pure theory have equipped us with those concepts and theoretical aids without which the study of such an intensely practical and personal subject as morality and ethics must be either sentimental or dictatorial.

²². *Ibid.*, pp. 138f.

CHAPTER TEN

Egoism and Altruism

EGOISM AND ALTRUISM

WHEN Meinong turns his attention to the problems of morality, he does not forget the questions which aroused his liveliest interest in the general theory of value. He carries over all of his conclusions into the new field. As we have seen, theory of knowledge is basic for his theory of value; in other words, values are contingent upon knowledge. But judgments alone cannot yield values; values result only when the judgment is accompanied by an emotional feeling.

The Ego-centric Predicament

The significance of theory of knowledge for morality is to raise the question as to the object of the moral emotion—whether or not altruism is in any sense possible—i.e., the problem of absolute egoism. Meinong is quite ready to admit that the strict egoistic position is valid in so far as it says that every value judgment is and must be my own value judgment; no one else can feel my emotions for me. But to say with Schopenhauer that sympathy is the greatest mystery of the world riddle, is, for Meinong, to attempt to explain the ninety and nine cases of perfectly obvious and evident altruism by some hundredth case where it is a little difficult to see how it can be such.

Everyone readily grants, no matter with what restrictions, that we can know a reality outside of ourselves; no one objects to the fact, that our interest, our valuation has reference to the objects of all sorts of this outer world. If one concede so much, then it is only reasonable to demand of him that he do not suddenly come to a halt, when among the objects of this reality he encounters psychic beings and the manifestations of their vitality, that draw his interest and his valuation to themselves. How is it possible

for our knowledge to make itself master of this reality "outside of us"? That is the riddle; but with respect to the existence of psychic beings other than ourselves it is of less significance.¹

Meinong's final answer to this ego-centric predicament is in the form of two questions: (1) Why call attention to the completely egoistic nature of desire if this is a characteristic of all desire as such? If this be the case then, surely, no advance has been made by using the word "egoistic." The term "egoistic desire" does have a genuine connotation in ordinary speech; why destroy this meaning and signification without any positive gain? This is at bottom a terminological objection, but at least it raises the possibility that the very universality of the ego-centric predicament permits us to cancel it out of the debate—a position which has since been adopted with reference to the whole of the idealistic position in epistemology by certain schools of realists. (2) Or one can put essentially the same question from another viewpoint. Who is not familiar with that distinction in character which we normally designate by the term egoistic as against non-egoistic? Thus by adopting the position of absolute egoism we not only describe desire in terms which lose for us those distinctions which are of importance in the discussion, but we also lose those distinctions which constitute the heart of any morality whatever. Meinong does not attempt, as Ehrenfels does, to confound the egoistic argument entirely, and is content if he has made his own position clear.

He accepts furthermore the well established usage of referring the value of the moral act to the end which the doer had in view. And having satisfied himself that he is justified in employing the distinction between egoism and altruism, he proceeds to classify moral valuations upon the basis of whether the object in view had reference to the self (egoism, in the narrower sense) or the other (altruism). Because there may very possibly be many valuations which on some basis or other might be called moral, but which would not be directed to the self or to the other, he supposes a third class, the neutral.

¹. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 43.

He had already classified values as having moral over-value, moral under-value, and moral marginal-value, as based on the Austrian marginal analysis. Now the question is: Do the three classes just derived; viz., egoistic, altruistic, and neutral; bear any direct relation to the other series of three classes?²

Morality and Values

It is necessary, before we can answer this question, to turn to each of these classes and examine it in detail. Even granting all that Meinong has said as to egoism, we must still concern ourselves with it in its narrower sense. This sense of egoism can perhaps best be defined as the opposite of altruism; at this point we must note that not all acts having the good of the other person in view are altruistic acts. For instance a teacher who is demonstrating the characteristics of color-blindness may have only the good and improvement of the students in his audience in view. In so far it would properly be designated as an altruistic valuation if he were pleased at the existence of something which would further this wish. But if it chances that the object which serves this purpose is the presence in the class of a person who is color-blind, then, although his valuation is not egoistic, it is certainly not altruistic, either. It must be, then, the good of the *Alter* as such which is the object of the strictly altruistic judgment. But there is still a further distinction to make: A father who seeks to make a violin virtuoso of his son may do so with the greatest possible self-sacrifice, and with the best intent possible; nevertheless it may be that his son does not care for music and that this is not what he would choose for himself. We cannot call such an act altruistic, and we must therefore restrict the concept of altruism to that which seeks that which the *Alter*, were he the value subject and equally well informed, would himself choose. It will be noted that this is a broader and more flexible definition of altruism than we find in the Golden Rule. Of course there lies included herein the difficulty of the case where the *Alter* wants something which is not for his own

². *Ibid.*, p. 96.

good; in some cases true altruism calls upon us to correct the error, but not always, or to overlook it when we cannot correct it.

In terms of the general value theory the distinction between altruism and egoism may perhaps be drawn most succinctly by saying that if the existence of that which another wishes or thinks to be for his own good awakens in us a positive value judgment, then we may call this altruism, and if it awakens a negative judgment, we may call it negative altruism. If we follow customary usage, this negative altruism might be designated egoism, or egoism in the narrower sense; there is, however, a difficulty which must not be overlooked, that egoism is frequently manifested not by a negative value judgment with respect to the good of the other, but by the failure to form a "sufficiently positive" value judgment under circumstances calling for such. We must therefore understand by egoism in the narrower sense either the actual negative value judgment with regard to the good of the other or the absence of a positive judgment which the code of the social group demands.

Values for the Self

There is another distinction in this field which Meinong finds it necessary to make, which may be illustrated as follows: The knowledge that the concert-public of a distant city has had the pleasure of hearing an exceptionally fine performance of some opera or symphony may give to the lover of the fine arts a certain genuine pleasure (in his capacity as lover of the arts) even though he may not hope ever to hear that concert or those artists, or even though he knows no one who was or could have been in the audience on the particular occasion. It is simply as lover of the fine arts that he is pleased. But it would be difficult to imagine him or anyone else as being pleased (even in the capacity of *gourmet*) over the knowledge that an exceptionally fine banquet had been spread before some members of that same audience. In other words, his genuine and perfectly proper pleasure at the anticipation of a banquet is posited on the assumption that he himself is to enjoy it in

person. On the basis of these and other considerations Meinong erects a classification of values as "me-istic" and "other-istic," although he immediately admits that such a terminology is too barbarous to be permitted to stand longer than necessary to make clear his meaning. He adopts then the terms "selfistic" and "unselfistic," but we may avoid any connotation of selfish and unselfish (which is not involved at all in these considerations) by employing the terms "ego-centric" and "altro-centric"; the former will then be understood to mean a value judgment in making which the value-subject had in mind the definite possibility that he himself might enjoy or suffer the value-object personally, and the latter the case where this aspect of the matter was absent.

Meinong has now considered all of the complications inherent in his original classes of egoistic and altruistic valuations. This discussion has yielded us two pairs of dichotomous terms, and the two dichotomies may be thought of as cutting across each other so as to form a cross classification.

This operation gives us the following table:³

	EGO-CENTRIC DESIRES.	ALTRO-CENTRIC DESIRES:
<i>Altruistic Desires:</i>	1. Love of family, of tribe, of Fatherland, of fellow-tradersmen, religious comrades, boon companions.	2. The Ideal Love of Mankind, freed from all restrictions and particularities.
<i>Inaltruistic (Egoistic) Desires:</i>	3. The egoistic desires in the narrower sense of the term. Pure selfishness.	4. Neutral Desires. The striving for truth, for art, sportsmanship freed of any ulterior interest.

Meinong now makes what may seem to be at first sight a rather violent assumption, namely, that the first and the second of the above classes are for all intents and purposes the same. In other words altruism is the same, whether it is

³. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

"broader" or "narrower." We shall see in a few moments that there are sometimes cases where an issue arises between two acts, both of which are altruistic, specifically with reference to this distinction. When Howard was forced to decide between the welfare of his son, or the reform of the prisons of England, he was faced by such a problem.⁴ And in fact, that Meinong here postpones or seems to overlook this obvious difficulty indicates again that his thought is directed as yet solely to moral analysis in its broadest and most abstract sweep. If we grant this assumption, however, it is clear that we have in the above table a threefold classification, between the altruistic, egoistic, and neutral. He is ready now to turn his attention to the question he raised before, as to whether these three moral classes are directly related to the three classes of the good which he had previously derived from his classes of the good: the moral over-value, moral under-value, and moral marginal-value; i.e., the morally negligible.

In order to investigate this problem adequately and to decide whether moral over-value is identical with altruism, etc., he adopts the logical definition of an identity, namely, that if all S is P and at the same time all P is S, then S is identical with P. He turns his attention first to the neutral valuations; are they identical with the marginal, with values of negligible worth? Nor does it require a lengthy analysis to show that even though all the negligible may be neutral from a moral viewpoint, yet not all of the morally neutral is negligible from a value viewpoint. Therefore we cannot assert an identity as between these two classes; the morally neutral, the fourth of the four classes in the foregoing table, simply falls entirely outside of the moral classifications of all sorts (and whether this also excludes it from the ethical entirely must be left to another investigation). It is concerned with æsthetic, economic, religious, social and other sorts of valuations; it does not raise the moral question as such at all. We may therefore exclude the neutral valuations from further consideration of this question.

⁴ I am indebted to Professor Sharp for this and other illustrations.

However, the possibility of finding a relationship between the classification of moral judgments (as good, bad, and indifferent) and the classification of moral purposes according to their objects (as altruistic and egoistic) is not to be immediately abandoned. It is clear that the class of altruistic valuations, composed of the two sub-classes of the ego-centric and the altro-centric altruisms, might be divided into two moral classes, but not, however, along the lines of the altro-centric and ego-centric dichotomy. The division would fall, rather, along the line fixed by whether the particular valuation is what we have already discovered to be "positive" or "negative" altruism; i.e., as to whether the existence-judgment of the existence of the good of another awakens in us positive or negative valuations. (See pp. 239f.) It will be remembered that this is the distinction which is ordinarily referred to when one speaks of "egoism" and "altruism." Common usage would certainly agree that the positively altruistic is to be considered as coinciding with the good, and the negatively altruistic with the bad, or evil. If this is the case then we can conclude that these two classes in each group can be paired off one with the other. And furthermore, a valuation which pays no attention to the welfare of others, but simply seeks my own personal welfare, can hardly be given a high value rank from the moral viewpoint, and may therefore be considered, to begin with, as being morally of negligible value, coinciding with the "marginal class" of the other classification (of value judgments).

The Concomitance of Morality and Altruism

Meinong regards this argument as merely a preliminary survey of his problem of the relation of the two classifications, and proceeds to analyze the six possible situations which arise in some detail. We may list these as follows:

1. (a) That all that is good is positively altruistic.
(b) That all that is positively altruistic is good.
2. (a) That all that is negatively altruistic is bad.
(b) That all that is bad is negatively altruistic.

3. (a) That all that is morally indifferent is egoistic.
 (b) That all that is egoistic is morally indifferent.

If any two statements of a single one of the above three pairs of propositions were both true, then this would establish the identity of the two classes involved in the given pair of propositions. Meinong suggests, however, that it is not merely in the hope of discovering such identities that one should examine these relations, but in order to gain a broader view of the whole problem of morality. Let us examine briefly Meinong's argument in each case.

(1a) At first glance one might be inclined to say that all that is good is positively altruistic. It must be remembered however that goodness is capable of quantitative variation; and also altruism carries within it a quantitative factor; i.e., the value of the object to the *Alter* (as estimated by the *Ego*). If there were a perfect identity between S and P in this case, then one might expect that an increase in the value of the object would involve a concomitant increase in the moral goodness of the act. This Meinong asserts not to be the case; in fact the two stand more or less in an inverse ratio, quantitatively. Thus if I consent to perform an altruistic act only when I am made to realize that it means a very great deal to the person for whose benefit it is intended, one cannot say that the act is as good as it would have been if performed with the knowledge that it would not be so highly appreciated.

One must be careful here to analyze this argument carefully, lest it take on an air of speciousness which it does not deserve. It might seem to be a contention justifying all of that officious charity, and only that, which is unwanted and uncalled-for. A rich man who stands before the choice of giving a hospital which is urgently needed, or giving an art museum of old masters to a backward community which would not and could not appreciate the gift, would be called upon, so it might seem according to this calculus, to choose the latter charity, on the score that he would be doing that which served a less-pressing need, and that therefore the moral goodness of the act would be the more unquestionable. Thus although the widow must

have known that her mite could not accomplish as much good in an objective measurement as the rich gifts of the wealthy, yet because "she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had" her gift has a greater moral value than that of the others. It is in the sense, then, that we can tell something of the motive behind the act, that we can say that the moral value of the act stands in inverse ratio to the value of the results of the act—owing to the fact that we may presume that the knowledge that the act does good is itself a certain stimulus to the performance of such acts, and further a stimulus which varies directly with the value of the ultimate result. Therefore in order to eliminate as much as possible this perturbing factor, we must take as our *test cases* those situations in which the objective good is at a minimum.

This analysis has a very clear relationship to the marginal utilities theory of the Austrian economists, for here as there the measurement of the value comes at the point where the least value-object brings about a change of behavior; i.e., the case of a man who is just persuaded to change from inactivity to activity with respect to a particular object. If, thus, all our altruistic acts were marginal acts in the sense that the values which they achieve might be regarded as the minimal stimuli to tempt us to perform the acts in question, then one might use Meinong's rule as a guide or measure of the moral goodness of the act. Fortunately this is not the case; in fact it is so little typical that it is only in the sense of a limiting case that it has any significance whatever. Most wealthy benefactors give money, e.g., for hospitals, not when there is only a vague need felt for such an institution—because as yet there is no community in which this even remotely resembles the actual state of affairs—but because the hospital is the most urgent need of which they are cognizant. We have devoted so much time to this problem because it is fundamental for an understanding of Meinong's calculus of moral values.

(1b) Is all that is positively altruistic good? Meinong suggests that one has only to think of such cases as Nepotism,

Partisanship, etc., in order to realize that this cannot be admitted, not to mention altruism toward those who are unworthy. (Nepotism and Partisanship would not constitute serious obstacles had not Meinong thrown overboard his own distinction between "ego-centric altruism" and "altru-centric altruism.") The fact that statement (1a) is only partly true, and that statement (1b) is not at all true renders it impossible to say that there is an identity between the good and the positively altruistic. Meinong then turns to the bad and the negatively altruistic.

(2a) Just as in the case of (1a) above, so in seeking for an identity between these two one is inclined at first to say that all that is negatively altruistic is *ipso facto* bad, but here again the investigation of the quantitative badness of the act and of the result of the act indicates that the two are not identical. Thus it is equally a case of negative altruism whether one commits murder by means of a single shot, which kills only the victim, or by means of a bomb which kills many, but the badness of the result is quite different.

(2b) In converting proposition (2a) one makes a statement which is again hardly consonant with the facts of common observation. Certainly not every thief is actuated solely by motives of hatred or negative altruism; his motives are merely self-enrichment, which is essentially egoistic, and as we have seen egoism is sometimes to be defined as the absence of an adequate sense of the rights of others.

(3a) and (3b) are cases of relatively minor interest. One cannot say that all that is morally indifferent is egoistic, owing to the fact that if it is possible for the altruistic occasionally to be bad, then one must leave room for the possibility of the border case where an altruistic act might be morally indifferent.

Thus we see that the attempt to establish identities between the two systems of classifications breaks down completely. We can however insist that propositions (1a) and (2a) are valid if one does not attempt to establish an identity between their

subjects and predicates respectively by the operation of "quantification," as explained above. Thus we can generalize as follows:

All good is positively altruistic, all negatively altruistic is bad, ...⁵

For the rest the table must be rejected, although this negative result should not be allowed to diminish the value of the positive results gained in certain details. Meinong is careful not to insist that his conclusions here are in any sense final; they are merely to be taken as path-finding efforts, which allow us, in sum, to identify for the most part, and with proper reservations, the good as positively altruistic, the negatively altruistic as bad, and the egoistic as morally negligible.

Collateral Values

To have agreed to this, however, still leaves many moral questions undecided and one of the most difficult problems is to determine the effect on the moral value of an act of the unforeseen consequences of the act; i.e., collateral effects of the will-act which were not at first envisaged. Every act inevitably includes many such incidental effects along with its principal aim or motive, and these have in some cases a controlling influence on the moral judgment. We may apply the results of the above discussion to this problem in setting up a sort of moral calculus to determine the degree and direction of this effect. The specific concept which Meinong introduces into his study at this point to achieve this result is that of the "collateral value." Collateral values are perhaps best defined as being simply the originally unforeseen additional consequences of the particular act. For instance, if I am trying to estimate the relative moral value of two acts, neither of which possesses any such collateral effects, then from this viewpoint there is no choice as between them. But if it happen that one of these acts also affects some other person or interest in some way or other, and this collateral value does not modify the will decision in some way, as e.g., deterring the person from his

⁵. Meinong, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

act, then we have to do with a "collateral value" which must be taken into consideration in forming our moral judgment. The relation between the primary and the collateral value may be: (1) identity, e.g., the work of the artist pleases not only the artist himself, but his public; (2) coexistence of two qualities in the same situation, as when a piano has a fine tone and poor mechanism; (3) causal connection, either where the primary value causes a collateral value, or *vice versa*: I may favor a certain law (Prohibition) "regardless of its consequences"; or "in order to do good to others I must earn a fortune."

Meinong has summarized abstractly all of the possible cases and collected them together in a "Value Table," always on the assumption, as we have seen, that egoistic values are morally neutral. In order to present this table with some slight modifications of symbolism, let G and E represent good and evil for another respectively, and g and e good and evil for the *Ego*. One can eliminate for the time being quantitative considerations by the assumption that $G = G$, $E = E$, $g = g$, and $e = e$; in other words we must consider whether the addition of a collateral value in any case increases or diminishes the total value, on the assumption that the "primary" value remains constant. The complete value table is as follows:⁶

1. $(GG) > (G) (?)$	5. $(gG) > (g) (?)$	9. $(EG) > (E) (?)$	13. $(eG) -$
2. $(Gg) = (G)$	6. $(gg) = (g) = O$	10. $(Eg) = (E)$	14. $(eg) -$
3. $(GE) < (G)$	7. $(gE) < (g)$	11. $(EE) < (E)$	15. $(eE) -$
4. $(Ge) > (G)$	8. $(ge) = (g) = O$	12. $(Ee) < (E)$	16. $(ee) -$

We have thus all possible combinations of the four values as primary and collateral values, although it is obvious that nothing can be said further with regard to the last four cases (13, 14, 15, 16) owing to the fact that no one can be conceived of as desiring his own evil, e , as a primary good. What is meant by the moral indifference of ego-centric interests is evident from the fact that (in cases 6 and 8) the addition of one's own evil or good as "collateral value" in no way affects

⁶. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-122.

the moral worth of the act as a whole, which remains as it was, equal to zero, for as Meinong says,

. . . from the moral standpoint it is a matter of no importance whether one, in pursuing his own interest, comes to receive either good or evil collaterally, which he had not fully realized was also involved in his goal.⁷

Also in cases 2 and 10 the addition of one's own good as collateral value in no way affects the total result, because one is inclined to suspect that the actor had this g in mind from the first and that therefore it does not serve here as collateral value, but as primary value: e.g., the donor of a hospital who insists that his name be carved in stone. And even where the ostensible motive of the act is the ill of the other (Eg), one is not condemned so fiercely where the suspicion arises that the good of the self is really primary rather than collateral. "Human, all too human." The will-binomial (Eg) would under such circumstances take the form (gE) instead; and Meinong insists quite rightly (case 7) that $(gE) < (g)$. In these cases we have "conflict of interests" to consider, and all such conflicts must be weighed in the inner conscience of the actor; the safe rule for others is "Judge not . . ." Nevertheless, Meinong insists that the "permissible" is not of zero value. In view of these considerations it would seem difficult to bring his cases 10 and 7 into harmony, for if there is a justifiable inequality in one, there would seem necessarily to be such in the other. In case 4, the very fact that a certain act involving good to another also carries with it evil to the self increases its moral value, and as we shall see later, the greater this sacrifice, the greater the value.

If we now turn to the odd-numbered cases, where G and E are the collateral values, we note that in cases 1, 5, and 9, the addition of the good of the other increases the moral value—although here Meinong indicates that the increase is so much less evident that it must be marked questionable. In cases 3, 7, and 11, the addition of the evil of another person always lessens the moral value, in case 11 almost self-evidently so.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

We have discussed case 7 above; case 3, however, demands close attention. In general it would seem clear that to further the interest of a person at the expense of another, or even at the expense of the beneficiary, is not so valuable as to further his interest without this sacrifice. Nevertheless we frequently find the question come to us in such a form that the good seems necessarily to involve the evil. A great reform or service to the community at large seems to involve the inevitable sacrifice of the interests of a minority; or in a more restricted sphere the admonition "spare the rod and spoil the child" would seem to justify the doing of some harm for the greater good. "To do a great right, do a little wrong" sometimes represents a moral dilemma which may seem more insoluble than the problem which Portia solved. Meinong grants that "necessity must not be made a reproach," but . . . he doubts whether the necessity ever really exists. The first duty of the moral judge is to find the way out, and not to assume that the dilemma is insoluble. So Meinong refuses to make a place in his table for "the exception."

Meinong goes on to suggest that it would be possible, theoretically, to set up a similar table for cases where instead of will or volition, we have to do with resistance and "nolition," for as he rightly remarks, to oppose something or to will its non-existence is by no means the same thing as to refuse to will or wish it. Nevertheless, he finds that one can assume that for all practical purposes the nolition can be regarded as the negative of the volition, and all that it would be necessary to do in order to transform the value table already given into this non-value table would be to employ the equations: $\text{non-}G = E$, $\text{non-}E = G$, and $\text{non-}e = g$, for of course it would not be necessary to provide for non- g as primary value in the table, owing to the fact that no one would strive against his own interest any more than he would strive for his own harm as primary value.

The Chief Value Formulæ

We can now employ this calculus of collateral values in order to analyze some of the most difficult problems of morality,

namely, those cases of conflicting interests which we have avoided up to this point. As we have seen, a collateral value is an additional outcome (whether causally related or not) which does not change the will-act, and Meinong employs the term "will-binomial" to designate the cases we have studied where a will-act is carried into execution as accompanied by such a collateral value. But where the ultimate consequences of the act are clearly foreseen from the beginning, then he adopts the term "project-binomial," and it is in such a case that we can have a real clash of interest, or in short a moral conflict.⁸ At first Meinong takes up for detailed consideration only two project-binomials which are of especial interest, from the moral viewpoint, because they typify the moral-conflict so completely. These are the binomials (Ge) and (gE), or in other words the cases where one deliberately sacrifices his own interests for the good of another or where he deliberately sacrifices the good of another for his own interests. These two binomials, (Ge) and (gE), are related to each other through the fact that they are, so to speak, quantitatively inverse one of another. Thus an increase in G means a diminishment in E , because one cannot will both the good and the ill of another at the same time, and the same is true with respect to g and e . Taking advantage of this fact, Meinong hopes that by a quantitative treatment of these two binomials, taken together as what he calls a "project-binomial-pair," he may lay the foundation for a rigorous analysis of these problems of moral conflict, which make up the vast bulk of all of moral casuistry and debate.

In approaching the quantification of these binomials, we shall change Meinong's symbolism a little in order to present it as succinctly as possible. If we remember the negligible moral worth of egoistic values which was derived in the value table, and the fact that when the good of the *Ego* is the primary value the addition of the evil of another as collateral value actually lowers this value (case 7), then it will be clear that a project-binomial of the form (gE) will always be below the null-point in value; and similarly if we note that the good of another, G , is,

⁸. *Ibid.*, pp. 125ff.

from the moral viewpoint, always a positive value when it functions as a motive, and that the addition of the ill of the self, e , as collateral value always raises this value (case 4), then it is clear that a project-binomial of the form (Ge) will always represent a positive moral value. Let, then, $V(Ge)$ symbolize "the quantitative value of an act aiming at the good of another, with evil to myself as the clearly foreseen inevitable collateral result"; and let a similar convention govern the meaning of $V(gE)$. Then Meinong makes a preliminary effort to establish a mathematically rigorous terminology and calculus of such cases by setting up the following equations to express these relations:

$$V(Ge) = C \frac{e}{G}$$

and

$$-V(gE) = C' \frac{E}{g}$$

where C and C' are simply constants of proportionality introduced for the sake of mathematical regularity.

If we put these equations into words they would read: The moral value of an act which involves the foreseen sacrifice of one's own interest for the sake of another's interest *varies* directly as the measure of my own interest (or the magnitude of the good which I sacrifice) and inversely as the measure of the good of the other for which I make the sacrifice; and one might read the other equation also in a similar way.

These two value formulæ are to be interpreted not as measurements of the real value under all circumstances, but as strictly "marginal measurements," if one may employ here the Austrian economic terminology. We have already noted the fact that Meinong is familiar with this analysis, and in fact has employed it in his discussion of the question of whether all that is good is positively altruistic, where he found that there was an inverse relationship between the value of the object desired and the moral value of the act of desiring that object. Thus if one were to expand the first of these two formulæ,

along these lines, it would read: As between two acts both of which will lead to the same degree of good for another, that act is morally more valuable which involves a greater sacrifice on my part. And clearly a similar expansion of formula two is also possible.

If we adopt the methods of algebra and assign values (roughly numerical) to the various constants of the provisional value formulæ given above, we can determine how the moral value of the project-binomial varies depending upon variations in the value of the G and g involved. This gives us the following⁹

TABLE OF LIMITING VALUES

- When $G \doteq \infty$, (1) $\lim V(Ge) \doteq O$, and (2) $\lim V(gE) \doteq -\infty$.
 When $G \doteq O$, (3) $\lim V(Ge) \doteq \infty$, and (4) $\lim V(gE) \doteq O$.
 When $g \doteq \infty$, (5) $\lim V(Ge) \doteq \infty$, and (6) $\lim V(gE) \doteq O$.
 When $g \doteq O$, (7) $\lim V(Ge) \doteq O$, and (8) $\lim V(gE) \doteq -\infty$.

This gives us eight cases in which we can bring to bear the test of every-day experience. For the most part they are found to survive this test, except that in the case of the willing of the good of another at the sacrifice of one's own interest, when the good of the other approaches zero (case 3) it would seem at times to be stretching a point too far to insist that the moral value approaches infinity. Thus if one take the case of one who goes to the brink of a precipice in order to pick up a handkerchief for another, this would seem to be a foolhardy rather than an infinitely precious moral act. But Meinong insists that such cases really fall under the heading of the extra-moral or ethical (as for instance, gallantry) and that therefore they do not affect the validity of his formulæ. In other words, if the situation is a really moral situation, then this case marks the limiting or border conditions—although perhaps it must be added there is no strictly moral case which approaches such extreme conditions.

The last two cases, (i.e., 7 and 8) however, do not receive much support from experience, and cannot be so easily disposed

⁹ Ibid., p. 132.

of; thus to do a good deed for another, even though the sacrifice on our part be trifling, always would seem to merit some praise. And the person who does harm to another even when the gain to himself is only trifling, hardly would seem to merit being classed with the most vicious moral reprobate. In order to correct these aberrations of theory from experience and at the same time not to disturb the results arrived at in the other cases Meinong introduces a slight modification into his formulæ, as follows:

$$V(Ge) = C \frac{e + c}{G}$$

and

$$-V(gE) = C' \frac{E}{g + c}$$

If the limiting values are computed, as was done on the preceding page, using these formulæ, it will be seen that the former result is disturbed only in the case where g approaches O , in which cases we have:¹⁰

When $g \doteq O$,

$$\lim V(Ge) \doteq \frac{C c}{G}$$

and

$$\lim V(gE) \doteq - \frac{C' E}{c}.$$

These results would be consonant with experience and may be allowed to stand.

This would seem to be as far as his calculus of the moral value of the project-binomial-pair (Ge — gE) can be carried with strict justification. He does however attempt to draw several additional inferences which round out his theory, but which can be accepted only on the basis of special conventions. For instance, as an additional aid in his computation, he raises the question as to what would be the limiting values in case we

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

allowed both G and g to vary at the same time and in the same direction, under the assumption that they were equal. Thus let us assume that one gives a present to another, and that the value of the present to the *Ego* is equal to its value to the *Alter*. Under such circumstances would an increase in the value of the present tend to occasion a corresponding increase in the value of the moral act of the giving or would it occasion an inverse decrease of this value? Common usage would say that the former is true; and in the extreme case where life is given for life one is accustomed to regard this as that greater than which no man can do for another. But if in our revised formulæ we let $G = g$, so that

$$V(Ge) = C \frac{G + c}{G}$$

and

$$V(gE) = -C' \frac{G}{G + c}$$

as G approaches infinity Meinong argues that this result of experience is not reflected in the formula. However, it must be noted that the quotient of the division of one infinity by another is purely a matter of convention, and has no meaning in algebra. We can therefore with propriety accept the above provisional formulations of what Meinong calls his first value formula as adequate for our purposes.

This constitutes the most valuable part of Meinong's contribution to a calculus of moral value. He tried to expand his researches, with results which he himself admits were not so significant, by the inclusion of a discussion of another project-binomial-pair which also has a certain interest for morality, although by no means the same importance as the pair already discussed. This second pair is the case where I seek my own good and incidentally serve the interest of another, or where I seek the harm of another even though I must sacrifice my own interest in accomplishing my harmful aim. The symbolic representation of this pair is ($gG - Ee$). A typical case coming under the latter binomial would be whether it is worse for

a man to set fire to his own house in order to burn down also the house of his neighbor, or simply to set fire to his own house because he begrudged his neighbor the shadow which his own house cast on his neighbor's lawn? We may be pardoned, however, for not following the analysis to such casuistical lengths, in view of the fact that we have already questioned the algebraical basis of his calculus.

However extreme, or as Meinong calls it, "drastic," this problem may appear to be, it is nevertheless important in that it indicates the nature of the "marginal analysis" which Meinong borrowed from the Austrian economists as the corner stone of his moral calculus. As he puts it:

Before all else, it is characteristic of the moral valuations with which we are here concerned, that they are based on a sort of measurement of the altruistic values in terms of the egoistic.¹¹

If, in a moral question, the good or evil of the other wins consideration over the good or evil of the self, this means that in this case it stands "above a certain margin," and *vice versa*. It is true that Meinong does not attempt to illustrate his marginal calculus by the rising and descending curves of value as measured with respect to the value of the component factors, but this is incidental.

Such is the character of Meinong's calculus of moral values. The whole construction appears at first sight to be extremely abstract and hypothetical. To criticize it merely in piecemeal would be very unfair; the history of mathematics has taught us that many abstract researches which at the time seemed to have no possible bearing whatever on actual physical or other "real" problems later have proved invaluable in the most practical researches. It is enough that Meinong is to be regarded as a pathfinder in a new field of human speculation. Just as in biology it was necessary for Linnæus to devote himself to the problem of classification before later men could realize the significance of the problem of "inter-grading" from which springs our modern conception of evolution, so it was incumbent upon

¹¹. Ibid., p. 150.



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this pioneer in the field of general value theory to supply later workers with a more or less complete classificatory scheme of the concepts involved. This gives to his work the appearance of abstractness and desolate bleakness; it is the starkness, however, of the athlete stripped for combat with some of the most subtle and evasive problems that man has ever faced. It is utterly unthinkable that anyone should take this calculus of moral value as in any sense a guide in practical moral problems or as a criterion in individual cases. It is a calculus which, as we have insisted, is utterly meaningless and may even appear absurd, unless it is thought of as applied solely to "marginal cases" in the terms of the Austrian economic analysis. Out of this calculus we may, however, draw certain general rules of morality, which may be expressed somewhat as follows:

1. In general, moral valuations (or acts) which have the good of others as their object are to be reckoned as morally good.

2. In general, moral valuations (or acts) which have the ill of others as their object (or as the condition of being regarded as positive values by the person making the valuation or performing the act) are to be reckoned as evil.

3. In general, acts or valuations which are strictly egoistic are morally neutral, and when they come into the situation as collateral values they have a negligible influence in determining the degree of the total value.

4. When a moral act involves both the good of the other and the good of the self, its value is to be calculated as being relatively in inverse ratio to the value of the act (or its result) to the recipient (the *Alter*) and as being in direct ratio to the value of the act to the doer (the *Ego*). This latter rule is completely reversed when it is a question of seeking an egoistic value at the expense of the *Alter*.

Justice

In conclusion we may note that there are certain moral questions, and even broader ethical questions, which one may employ the moral calculus to illustrate if not to decide. The

most important of these is the old Platonic problem of Justice. What does Meinong, on the basis of this analysis, find justice to be? In the first place it is, clearly, a relative matter, and refers to the relative returns to each value-subject in a given complex situation rather than to the absolute magnitude of the return in value to any one of them. If one consider the project-binomial (GE), in other words the case where one seeks to do good to another but at the expense of the interests of still a third person, or even at the expense of the other himself, then justice would involve the relative weighing of this G and this E. The more the particular return to a given individual varies from the "normal"—as decided by comparing this case with others—the greater the injustice. One may question, furthermore, whether justice, in this sense, is after all so far removed from the morality which Meinong has derived in the course of the foregoing investigations. We may make this clear by first summarizing the results of the investigation of morality, which Meinong does in the following words:

. . . That which is morally valuable in a will-act is the *sympathy for the good and evil of others which is actualized by this will-act itself*.¹²

But this definition is incomplete unless we introduce into it the factor of relative equality brought to light by the consideration of justice, for

Altruistic acts with reference to friends or persons closely related are not equivalent in moral value to those with reference to strangers; for, one hears it said often, there is no merit in exerting oneself for that which one enjoys; and Kant's baroque opposition between duty and love exhibits to us the same fundamental idea, but to be sure, in an exaggerated form that amounts to a deformation.¹³

And not only do we discount positively moral acts which are done through a personal interest, but we tend to minimize the badness of negative acts which are motivated through hatred or revenge.

It will be remembered that in the classification of moral valuations Meinong neglected for the time being the distinc-

¹². *Ibid.*, p. 154.

¹³. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

tion between the "selfistic" (ego-centric) and the "unselfistic" (altro-centric) altruistic valuations; he now finds that it is necessary to take account of this distinction. He finds, in short, that

. . . our chief formulæ hold true only under the presupposition, that the dispositional altruism which is actualized by the act of the will in question is unselfistic. One can even add, that in cases of selfistic altruism, regardless of whether they are positive or negative, the resultant value is just so much less, the narrower the bonds are which bind together the *Ego* and the *Alter*. Sympathy is thus of full value, only under the presupposition that it is equivalent to the average-sympathy, or, as one can also put it, that it is a just sympathy.¹⁴

As a result of these considerations he is compelled to restrict the definition of the morally valuable which we have just quoted as follows:

*The object of the moral valuation is the impersonal sympathy for the good and evil of fellow-men which is actualized by the will-act in question.*¹⁵

Justice and morality are then merely different sides of the same object, which is viewed now from the relative and again from the absolute viewpoint.

Meinong admits readily enough that this is not a novelty or unheard-of result to reach for any one familiar with the fundamental principles of the Christian ethics. But what he has been interested in is not the discovery of novelty as such, but the discovery of those uniformities and coincidences in the moral opinions of every-day life which constitute the true science of morality, and clearly in such a case a novel result would have led to distrust more than the literal restatement of the most hoary moral adages. The fundamental difference in point of view between Meinong and Ehrenfels probably never came more clearly to formulation than in Ehrenfels's criticism of this passage, where, after quoting Meinong's defense of the lack of novelty in his results, he remarks:

This is Meinong's judgment upon the result of his investigation. One can, however, properly raise the question whether it is scientifically justifiable

¹⁴. *Ibid.*

¹⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

to place such a long established principle in doubt, in order, by means of a tiresome and circumstantial heuristic process, to bring it forward again as something new. I would not hesitate to reply in the negative to such a question, if Meinong's investigations were not exceedingly stimulating, and did not offer countless evidences of insight and perception of ethical questions, whose scientific value is quite independent of the final result.¹⁶

That this criticism is to a certain extent unfair may, it would seem, be established on the basis of the fact that Meinong has nowhere in his work deliberately put the Christian, or any other, moral system in question, but, as noted above, he began the investigation of moral values *de novo* and as strictly as possible on the basis of his previous researches in general value theory; if anything, as we shall see, he rather accepts as fundamental the common usage of every-day life (which may be presumed to be largely saturated with the teaching of the Christian ethics) in the matter of his four chief moral classes, which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

To pursue, however, such a question of justification is of far less significance than to note that herein Ehrenfels indicates negatively what we shall soon find to be the positive basis of his own investigation of ethics: the acceptance of the ethical code of western Christendom as a working basis for his study.

Ehrenfels was not, however, primarily interested in the analysis of morality and accepted most of the analysis which he found in the work of Meinong. As in the general value theory, so also in the applications of value theory, he was more concerned with the genetic side of the problem than with the purely descriptive. We shall turn therefore, at this juncture, to these more genetic questions, to the actual situations which arise in the moral world, and to a study of the moral judgments which human beings pass on each other. Few people are ever aware of the possibility of constructing a rigorous calculus of moral and ethical judgments such as Meinong has worked out here. But many people are conscious of the *phenomenon* of moral sentiment. This is an inner phenomenon, but none the less real, and as we have seen, even more open to the

¹⁶. Ehrenfels, "The Ethical Theory of Value," pp. 377f.

empirical investigation of a psychologist of the new empirical wing of thought. With Meinong's *a priori* calculus as a background we can hope to see whether the methodology of the new empiricism has aught to say on the problems of ethics and morality.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Ethics and Morality

XII

ETHICS AND MORALITY

IT WAS perfectly natural that men who had devoted such intensive investigation to the general theory of value should turn with great interest to the study of ethics and morality, and should make there a noteworthy contribution. The reason for this interest is of course that the general value theory, by itself and merely as pure theory, would be a system of empty concepts. It draws its life-blood from the applications which are or can be made of it in the particular value sciences. For this reason, both Meinong and Ehrenfels look upon ethics as merely one of the fields of application of the general theory of value. This means that there is nothing more transcendental or revealed in ethics than in economics or æsthetics; they look upon ethics as simply a problem in the psychology of valuation. It is true that the psychological processes which characterize ethical valuation differ somewhat—primarily as to the object of the valuation—from the other valuations, but these differences are purely descriptive and in no way fundamental.

The Differences between Ethics and Morality

For Meinong, the fundamental difference between the psychological process of ethical valuation and that of other valuation may be subsumed under the question as to the viewpoint from which the ethical valuation takes place. This is not the same thing as to inquire *who* makes the ethical judgment, for it is clear that every person, in so far as he concerns himself at all with moral questions such as have occupied us for the last two chapters, functions as a moral judge, or the framer of moral judgments. But it is by no means so clear that these judgments, in so far as they conform to the canons of morality, represent the viewpoint of the moral judge himself. In other words,

the moral judge, *quâ* judge, is simply the psychological vehicle for the judgment, and the question as to the viewpoint from which his moral judgment comes *quâ* moral judgment is quite other than the question as to the psychology of his valuation simply as a valuation. Very closely related to this problem is that relating to the validity of the ethical judgment, which must be regarded as being broader than merely the question as to the qualifications of the individual moral judge to form his ethical judgment; it may well be that the validity of the ethical judgment, such as it is, depends entirely upon the viewpoint from which the judgment is made, especially if it be that this viewpoint is distinctively other than that of the moral judge himself. It is in this sense that Meinong seeks the answer to the question as to who is the moral judge, or who is the real subject of the moral valuation.

Meinong commences the consideration of the value-subject with the remark that there are few if any people who normally would realize that the subject of the moral judgment presents any problem at all. It speedily becomes clear that this subject cannot be the *Ego*,¹ for why should the *Ego* find that an act was more valuable where the *Alter* gets more than himself?—or even if we presume a native altruism (in the narrower sense) in the *Ego*, why should the *Ego* find that an act is more valuable where he himself loses more or where the *Alter* gains less? And yet such is the conclusion which Meinong has already drawn in the course of the deduction of the chief value formulæ. Is one more justified in identifying the subject of the moral judgment with the *Alter*? In so far as these chief value formulæ are concerned this is more possible than in the case of the *Ego*, at least with reference to the negative values. Both formulæ indicate that when the *Alter* suffers evil, this is a negative value, and the greater the evil the more negative (or the greater in degree) the value. But these formulæ imply that, in the case of altruistic acts, the value is greater depending upon the magnitude of the cost to the doer; in view of the fact that for the *Alter* the *Ego* of the formulæ is merely another *Alter* it would

¹. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 163ff.

seem that if the subject of the moral judgment is the *Alter*, he always values from the negatively altruistic viewpoint, and thus this assumption that the subject of the moral judgment is the *Alter* leads to the conclusion that pleasure at the pain of others (*Schadenfreude*) is morally valuable, which is certainly self-contradictory.

Is it possible to measure the moral values from the viewpoint of the *intentions* of the actor? Or from that of the wishes of the recipient? The latter is certainly excluded by the fact that the morally better implies that the recipient receives less. The intentions of the actor, however, have this much in their favor, that they are the normal *object* of the moral judgment. Does the value of the intentions, as moral object, coincide then with the value of the moral judgment as such? It must be admitted that the goodwill of others is pleasing to us, and their illwill is displeasing or unpleasant. So much follows from our treatment of the desires and wills of others as value objects. But we must not forget that "to give is more pleasant than to receive" and that therefore it would be impossible to found a moral system on the basis of a pauperizing charity—for every giver implies a receiver, and the greater value to the giver is at the expense of the receiver. One would certainly search in vain for a business man who, in case of threatened bankruptcy, would prefer to be saved by the generosity of his creditors rather than by the fortunate outcome of the strictly egoistic interests of his partners. In other words, if we were to measure moral value by the intentions of the actor most men would prefer moral null-value to moral plus-value. It is true that there are some counter instances to be offered, such as those who are so pauperized as willingly to accept charity; but one must here investigate whether this willingness is prompted by the realization that they have dependants in whose interest they must accept what they would otherwise reject. If the interest which prompts acceptance is an impersonal one, then this fact increases the moral value of the act, but at the expense of diminishing its coincidence with the criterion under investigation. The value which a person places on a charitable or

beneficent act is indicated by his reaction, that is by his thankfulness. But the ephemeral character of almost all gratitude, and the all too frequent occurrence of actual ingratitude must give us pause if we are to seek the subject of the moral judgment in the person of the beneficiary of the moral act. By this argument Meinong does not intend to imply that the actor or the recipient is prevented from forming a moral judgment concerning the act, but that he must form this judgment not by virtue of his relationship to the situation but *in abstraction from it*.

We may readily enough grant Meinong's fundamental position that neither the *Ego* nor the *Alter* can be regarded as the one who forms the value judgment which measures the worth of the moral act, or more generally as representing the viewpoint from which it is formed. Who than shall it be? Moral judgments can form no exception to the general rule that like other values they are the judgments formed by men like ourselves. And following the general line of his argument, since all persons who are in any way directly interested in the situation cannot qualify except by limitations which eliminate their special interest, it is clear that the subject of the moral judgment is the disinterested spectator, or rather the innumerable many disinterested spectators who may be conceived of as being in a position to form a judgment upon the question at issue.

The problem now arises whether the moral judgments are formed as the result of some sort of "majority vote" of all the disinterested spectators or of the "environing totality," as Meinong prefers to call them. If this were the case would it not be possible to imagine a society which by such a vote should adopt an essentially immoral code and call it morality? Could not such a society agree that rogues and scoundrels were moral beings, and that theft, rapine, and murder were morally praiseworthy? Meinong insists, however, that this is merely a matter of definition, for one is always free to call good what he wishes. But even if the majority did upset our well-established moral codes, there would still remain the stoic resource

employed by all "conscientious objectors"—who in their turn fall back on *Definitionsfreiheit*. At this point Meinong shows, however, his vigorous empiricism by insisting that:

Questions of value are questions of fact; for this reason every value, with respect to its object as well as its subject, is bound up with matters of fact, and moral value can be no exception from this rule. It is a value for human beings; i.e., for creatures possessing the characteristics which we know as human, or are accustomed to recognize as such; a theory of moral value can no more concern itself with subjects possessing radically different emotional capabilities than can physics investigate a nature possessing other laws.²

Meinong insists therefore that the value theory which he has derived has this empirical support, and it is with this assurance that he calls upon the disinterested spectator to function as the subject of the typical moral valuation. He denies categorically that any extrinsic value which his moral value code may prove to possess is in any sense responsible for the existence or persistence of this code (calling attention here to the many possibilities of value error in dealing with extrinsic values which we have discussed in Chapter IX). But he recognizes readily enough that the question whether this code does possess extrinsic value is of prime importance, and if such were found to be the case, then this would be additional grounds for assigning to the disinterested spectator the rôle of subject of the moral judgment, for the dissenter could then be *shown* to be either in error or inadequately informed. We shall consider this further in the next chapter.

Meinong does not make, in his work, a very marked distinction between ethics and morality. The central problem in this field is obviously that concerning the good and the bad, as related to the acts and intentions of moral agents. Ethics is a term which is not so well known or familiar to the mass of the people, and since there is little essential difference between the two terms he elects to employ "morality" when speaking of this narrower field of the good and the bad, leaving "ethics" as the designation of the wider field of judgments of value which includes morality as its central problem. Only after he has

². *Ibid.*, p. 270.

completed his analysis of the moral as such is it possible for him to make clear just what he means by the "extra-moral ethical." He is anxious, above all, as we have seen, to make his approach to the moral question as empirical as possible.

This empiricism of the school stands out perhaps even more clearly in the early pages of Ehrenfels's study of morality. In turning to the application of his value theory to these problems Ehrenfels indicates that he does not wish his results to be thought of as in any sense final or definitive by calling the second volume of his *System der Werttheorie* by the indefinite title *Elements of an Ethics* (*Grundzüge einer Ethik*). His *Grundbegriffe der Ethik* comes from a much later period of his thought, a period which we must characterize as being more *a priori* than empirical, for it follows all of his extensive researches into sexual and racial ethics, and he is for the most part the protagonist of views which were not popular and which he felt compelled to demonstrate by rather elaborate deductive reasoning. We are, however, interested in the value theory of the Austrian school primarily as an empirical theory, so that we shall be forced to neglect these later developments of Ehrenfels's theory for the time being, although they could not be omitted from a study of the later developments and practical applications of the Austrian theory.

We shall therefore discuss the empirical ethics of Ehrenfels as we find it for the most part in the second volume of the *System*; his argument here begins, as do so many of his arguments, with a disjunction, this time between the various procedures possible for one who attempts to study the essential basis of ethics. He finds three possibilities open: (1) to base his study upon the popular connotation of ethical terms, (2) to base it upon a more strict and scientific usage of these terms (which might be designated their real or proper connotation), and (3) to abandon any attempt to understand ethics in terms of the popularly accepted or accurately determined meanings of the terms at all, and resort to the denotation of these terms, to the actual objects which are universally conceded to be the objects to which ethical concepts can correctly

be applied.³ Even if we find that our confidence in the significance of the universal agreement in these matters is disappointed, he insists that this fact at least would be of importance for any further study.

Most ethical studies have commenced by one or the other of the two former methods, and although he does not cite actual cases he asserts that their oft-repeated failure to reach any significant or demonstrable results justifies him in trying the third possibility. The illustration which he employs makes his meaning perfectly clear. Imagine one who tries to determine the nature of "horse" or "dog" without the aid of biological science; shall he accept the popular definitions which he finds around him, or shall he attempt to work out some abstract system in terms of which he may give to each concept a perfectly clear-cut definition (albeit no more accurate, necessarily, than the many popular notions he rejects, even if more consistent and systematic), or shall he first turn his attention to all of the different animals which are referred to by all sorts of people as "horse" or "dog" and then by an inductive study of these animals arrive at his concept of them? Clearly the last method promises to Ehrenfels more constructive progress, and he therefore embarks on an empirical investigation of ethics.

As a preliminary to this study we must note the distinction which Ehrenfels makes in his usage of the terms ethical and moral. He agrees with Meinong that morality is a sub-class under the ethical, but the difference between them is more than merely a matter of terminological convenience. Moral praise and blame are directed to that sort of act which comes directly under a definite "imperative" as for instance "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother" or "Thou shalt not kill." It is peculiar to the moral imperative that the conscious violation of its behests is immediately punished with moral condemnation. On the other hand there are many instances of praise and blame which are directed not to particular instances of a violation of an imperative code but rather to dispositions of character, or if directed to a violation of the

³. Ehrenfels, *System*, II, p. 11.

code consist not in condemnation of the violation as such but of the disposition which caused the violation. Such valuations are what Ehrenfels calls ethical valuations, and he cites as instances the praising of the benevolence or the condemnation of the heartlessness of an individual. In the nature of the case these ethical valuations cannot be imperative in the sense that one can demand of a person that he obey the Decalogue, for to demand that one have such and such dispositions of character is meaningless. Thus the moral values are for the most part negative—thou shalt not's—whereas the same is not true of the ethical. That a man should tell a lie or steal just once—although acts which would call for moral condemnation and even criminal prosecution—would not justify us in denominating him a liar or a thief.⁴ It would be only if he persisted in this sort of behavior sufficiently to bring us to think that these acts revealed his real character that he would fall also under the ban of the ethical disapprobation.

The capacity to desire in a given direction is a characteristic which causes the actions that tend in the given direction. The desire-disposition is then eminently fitted to be the object of the ethical valuation.⁵

In Ehrenfels's attempt to be clear as to the distinctions between ethics and morality he raises problems the solution of which is fundamental to the whole discussion. In general the moral judgment which classifies an act categorically according to the imperatives of morality and the ethical valuation which evaluates the disposition from which the act springs coincide both as to direction (i.e., as to whether the given case is an instance of good or bad) and magnitude. But there are anomalous cases such as that of the man who, like Robin Hood, robs the unrighteous to give charity to the deserving poor. His dispositions (motives) are good; the act categorically considered is bad. This would seem to justify also all sorts of political assassination and violence. There are, however, two answers possible, neither of which pretends to be adequate (so that it may be that there are ultimately cases which do present this

⁴ Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," iii, p. 338.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

anomaly in unmitigated and ineluctible form). These two counter considerations are: First, that even though the effect of the act is in some senses good, it is also a disservice to the very people it serves in that it tends to break down the moral restraints which are vital to all society, and thus the harm which ultimately flows from it well may outweigh the temporary good flowing from this apparently exceptional case. Secondly, one is quite free to question in too many instances the real goodness or benevolence of the dispositions of a man guilty of such acts—there are too many other motives which might be operative, such as the desire for glory or notoriety.⁶

The discrimination of the truly ethical is thus a much more difficult problem than is that of the moral. In fact one can appreciate the complexity of the problem only if he imagines the code he has in mind as being called into question in the severest possible casuistic conflict of ethical principles. This fact has been recognized by many ethicists, and it is only necessary for us to cite the cases Ehrenfels employs to show that his concept of ethics is as searching as any employed by recent ethical thinkers. An ethical problem arises when a man who is faced with a moral dilemma and who wishes to solve his problem in the correct moral way still cannot tell which of the proposed solutions is the truly moral. A man may be entrusted with a sum of money under such circumstances that there can be no possible check as to whether he fulfills the trust—other than his own conscience. It may be very difficult for him to decide which way to act so as most completely to carry out the terms of his obligation. Morality merely imposes on him the requirement: "Live up to thy trust." The question of values, how best to live up to his trust, would be an ethical one. Ehrenfels imagines a casuistical case in the sexual life of a young student who is preparing for his final examinations: The alternatives seem equally impossible and reprehensible, and yet (under the supposed conditions) there seems no other way to solve the problem.⁷ One well may argue that such a case is purely hypothetical; it would be only a Pharisee who would

⁶. Ehrenfels, *Grundbegriffe der Ethik*, p. 7.

⁷. Ehrenfels, *Sexualethik*, pp. 2ff.

insist that such moral dilemmas never arise or are always capable of easy solution. It is the province of ethics here to adjudicate among various modes of action no one of which is free of moral blame; the ethical judgment will be based on whether the student possessed the disposition to do the very best thing possible under the circumstances, within the limits of his abilities and knowledge—and was willing to secure such aid as he could in consultation with others better informed and sympathetically equipped to aid him.

But there is a more fundamental duty still which Ehrenfels assigns to ethics. When in the course of his moral wrestling and ethical doubt the student turns thus to some one for counsel, he may be so unfortunate as to stumble on one of those ethical sophists who insist that there is no right nor wrong but what we want for our own happiness and pleasure. This is the theory of absolute egoism which Ehrenfels had not hesitated to attack, as we have seen, along the lines adopted by Hume and Meinong. The Austrian school is quite willing to admit that there is doubt and question as to the true ethical code; yet no one of these men ever has admitted that the sophist can demonstrate there is no such code, or can discourage the real student of value theory from trying to discover at least its major outlines. In this respect it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between ethics and the general theory of value itself, other than that ethics furnishes the data for the application of the concepts of the general theory. There are thus two aspects of ethics: the more narrowly practical (i.e., the question as to which of a number of inevitably competing valuations should be accepted, the adjudication of moral dilemmas) and the more broadly theoretical question as to whether there is any ultimate standard in ethics of any sort. The former involves also the judgment of the worth of the dispositions to do the morally right which the individual demonstrates in solving his dilemma, for any such dilemma is always as much the product of these dispositions as it is of the external conditions. The second aspect on the contrary is in no sense a judgment on dispositions, for it is not concerned with them at all.

It is simply the question whether there is any ultimate standard on which such judgments can be made, whether there is a code which is necessarily valid for all.

There is one final distinction which Ehrenfels insists upon early in his study and which we must note in order to orientate ourselves properly. He insists that the ethical valuations must not be the judgments of one sole person, or they would immediately lose all their significance; rather they must be the collective judgments of a whole social group. Furthermore they must be absolutely impartial as to the person who chances to possess the dispositions or be the recipient of the benevolences which are their object.⁸ These are, however, the characteristics of what Ehrenfels refers to as social-ethical phenomena. In contrast to this stands individual ethics. Social ethics involves those rules of conduct which are applicable to the behavior of a man in a society; individual ethics is the system of ideas of right and wrong which would apply even though he were living in total isolation. Our primary concern here, however, is with the social ethics, and we may postpone for the time being further consideration of the individual problems.

Ethical valuations are directed, then, to the judgment as to the presence or absence of dispositions of a particular sort, leading or tending to a desired or undesired type of behavior. Our inference as to the actual presence or absence of these dispositions must be based partly upon the nature of the particular act but especially on the habitual action of the individual;⁹ one may even go further and conclude as to the presence or absence of the particularly desired dispositions from involuntary or unconscious acts of all sorts, e.g., weeping or blushing (cf. the Freudian "complex indicators" and "slips of the tongue"). And in fact omissions of acts or failures to act when one might normally expect a certain type of behavior to take place are sometimes as significant of the real dispositions as overt acts possibly could be.¹⁰ Ehrenfels is here dealing with the concrete and negotiable data of empirical psychology as the determinants of his ethical judgments, and he is not content

⁸. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," iii, p. 325.

⁹. *Ibid.*, pp. 336f.

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, pp. 342f; cf. Ehrenfels, *System*, II, pp. 22f.

merely to rephrase the vague abstractions and generalizations which have marked so much of previous ethical speculation.

Even so, the problem would remain as to just how, or on what basis, we are to arrive at a judgment as to the worth of the dispositions which we find in this way to characterize a certain man. We may state briefly several ways which Ehrenfels suggests for mediating such judgments. It is clear that every act involves a "goal-sequence" consisting of the means adopted to a given end, the end itself, and the ultimate results which flow from the act whether foreseen or not. In some cases one and in some cases others, or perhaps all of these aspects of the act must be taken into consideration. Thus two men engage in business to earn money presumably for laudable or proper purposes. One of them conducts his business in an upright manner, the other cheats; clearly this difference in means employed serves as the basis of an ethical or moral judgment. Or again the two men both perform exactly the same act, say a contribution to a worthy charity, the one with the sincere intent of doing good, the other to secure the approbation of his fellows; again we have no difficulty in arriving at an ethical judgment on the basis of the ends in view. Or finally, the two men perform the same sort of act, say the carrying on of their business as merchants or carriers, both with equally laudable motives of honest gain to be employed for proper purposes, but there happens to be an epidemic raging which leads one of the men to discontinue his business in a certain territory for fear of spreading the contagion, whereas the other insists that as long as his methods of business and motives are themselves correct he sees no reason for holding back, in spite of the ultimate consequences which might flow from his act. Here also we have adequate grounds for an ethical judgment.

The Interrelations of Ethics and Morality

We turn now to the second part of our problem, which concerns not the differences between, but the interrelations of, ethics and morality, especially in so far as these interrelations permit us to discover a unity throughout the whole sphere of the problem of the good and the bad. Meinong

finds,¹¹ on the basis of popular usage, that when one omits the performance of what is generally called a meritorious act, the result is what is generally designated as "permissible"; i.e., the omission of something which the society could not demand, even though the society would praise the performance of the act. In a certain sense, then, the meritorious and the permissible may be said to lie upon opposite sides of a "null-point," and are connected to each other in the most abstract and universally valid way by a law of omission (*Unterlassungsgesetz*). This, however, ought not to be taken to mean that the one is solely and eternally good and the other infinitely bad, although we cannot deny that in a sense the "positive" member of the pair is more right and desirable than the "negative" is bad. There are many things which are permissible without in any sense being bad; they nevertheless are on the "under" side of the null-point because if one omits their performance the result is uniformly good, and thus yields a law which might claim universal validity.

He then makes a similar argument for two other classes of moral acts; if it is blameworthy to do something, according to the moral judgments of the social group in which one lives, then if one omits the performance of this act, one cannot say immediately that such omission is right or good or meritorious. All that one can say is that such omission is perfectly "correct." Blameworthy and correct are thus also related by a symmetrical relationship of the same sort, such that the omission of the one gives the other; for it is clear that the omission of the "correct" leads to a blameworthy, if one understands by "correct" a technical term to designate this particular correlative of blameworthy. Here again we have difficulty in insisting that of these two classes the one is good and the other bad; Meinong therefore abstracts from the whole situation and instead of employing here the terms good and bad he sets up the two purely abstract classes of "moral over-value" and "moral under-value"; the former would include the meritorious and the correct; the latter, the permissible and the blameworthy.

¹¹ Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 88ff.

It must be realized at the start that this analysis is extremely abstract and formal. Thus Meinong entirely overlooks cases where it would be very praiseworthy indeed to exercise a little restraint in the performance of blameworthy acts. His system neglects the cases where the performance of the morally right is something more than merely the calculus of a moral arithmetic. As viewed in its most abstract form, it is true, one might accept this law of omissions, for such abstractness is necessary if one seeks a law of universal validity. But such abstractness is inimical to the appreciation of the warm human problems which arise constantly in the instilling and enforcement of a moral code. For instance, one thinks involuntarily of the moral conditions in a crowded city. A particular act, stealing for example, may be known for what it is, wrong, and yet this knowledge remain for the most part abstract and impotent, for the conditions are such that the temptations to perform the act are frequently almost overpowering. If some gamin actually does resist such temptations, and does succeed in restraining his impulses to the extent necessary to avoid stealing, it would seem a hard code of morals indeed which did not accord to such a poor devil the modest meed of praise he has earned; furthermore it is obvious that teleologically it is important to overlook these hard and fast abstractions in order that the (perhaps not strictly justifiable) praise may serve in the building of moral character. Of course, Meinong could return to the argument in such a case by insisting that under such conditions one could not say strictly that stealing was wrong or blameworthy. It would correspond more closely to what he has listed as permissible, to that the omission of which would entitle the doer (or restrainer) to praise. Such an answer is perhaps admissible, but it is evidence of the essentially formal and abstract nature of the whole system. It raises, furthermore the question what is meant by "the moral code of a social group" which is a problem demanding extended analysis.

The question to be answered in this analysis is not merely a matter of terminology as to "moral codes"; it is rather that as to whether any possible adjustment of nomenclature can

account for these anomalies. Perhaps the difference between Meinong's scheme of classification of moral judgments according to the law of omissions, and the scheme of classification which rules our every-day thought on good and bad may best be illustrated by some such considerations as the following. Let us suppose that under certain conditions more or less similar to those actually observed around us it is regarded as good to tell the truth and bad to lie. It is also, under these conditions, (i.e., "according to our present-day code") regarded as good to serve another even at the cost of our own interests, and bad not to do so. Clearly such a condition can lead to moral conflicts of a most embarrassing nature, and we shall therefore avail ourselves of the methods of casuistry in order to determine if possible what is the ultimate classification of moral good. We may assume for the purposes of this study that the moral value of telling the truth as such remains constant, but that the moral classification of the act depends upon the collateral good to be served. Thus we can tabulate some typical cases as follows, the columns at the right serving to indicate the moral judgment first according to "every-day standards" as defined above, and then according to Meinong's classification of moral judgments.

CASE	EVERY-DAY STANDARDS:		MEINONG'S CODE:	
	<i>Performance:</i>	<i>Omission:</i>	<i>Performance:</i>	<i>Omission:</i>
1. <i>Lie to save another's life:</i>	Praiseworthy	Blameworthy	Praiseworthy	Permissible
2. <i>Lie to save another's name:</i>	Correct	Permissible	Correct	Blameworthy
3. <i>Lie to save another's fortune:</i>	Permissible	Correct	Permissible	Praiseworthy
4. <i>Lie to save another's pleasure:</i>	Blameworthy	Praiseworthy	Blameworthy	Correct

The basis for the judgments listed in the two columns headed "Every-day standards" is that it is assumed that for most people, and as a matter of general usage (and it must not be forgotten that popular usage is the ultimate criterion appealed to by Meinong himself throughout his value theory) the four value classes may be arranged in what may be called an ascending scale. It may very well be that according to the introspections and moral judgments of any particular person or code the four typical cases that we have selected might not be classified exactly as we have done in the foregoing table. But this is of minor importance so long as the fact is granted that some such classification is possible, and that the four classes stand in this relative relation one to another. And if it be objected that we are here dealing with "collateral values"—and we have had occasion above to note Meinong's calculus of such values—all we need reply is that our employment of collateral values was solely for the purposes of casuistry, in order to find four convenient cases of moral act which would be related to each other as we find these. So far as the argument is concerned we could have confined ourselves just as well to four separate and isolated acts.

In the last two columns, in which we have given the judgments according to "Meinong's code," that headed "performance," it will be noted, is simply a reproduction of the "performance" column according to "Every-day standards." In other words we assume that Meinong would accept our casuistical classification as being according to popular usage. The last column, "omission" according to "Meinong's code" represents, then, the strict application of Meinong's law of omissions, and it is apparent that such a treatment of these judgments involves his system in some rather anomalous situations, such as, e.g., that it is permissible to refuse to lie to save another's life, but *under the same code* blameworthy to refuse to lie merely to save his name; and actually praiseworthy to refuse to lie in order to save another's fortune, although correct (and hence of lesser moral worth) to refuse to lie in order to save merely his pleasure. In other words, if we follow strictly the popular usage, it will be found that generally for

any such series of casuistical judgments, "praiseworthy" and "blameworthy" are related to each other by the law of omissions, and "correct" and "permissible" are also related to each other. Thus it would seem that no possible adjustment of nomenclature or terminology could eliminate this anomaly.

If, however, we seek a genetic account of our usage of moral terms, it may be that this difficulty will not be so insurmountable. It is a matter of common knowledge that *what* is blameworthy—correct (depending upon whether it is "performed" or "omitted") and *what* is similarly meritorious—permissible change and interchange and undergo secular variations from generation to generation. Meinong has recognized this broad fact only in the most incidental way, leaving it to Ehrenfels to deal adequately with it, as we shall see in the next chapter. For instance, a strictly individualistic code of morals would grant that one was under no *obligations* whatever to go a step out of his way even in order to save a life; of course if he did so his act would be regarded by even an individualistic code as praiseworthy and meritorious. Thus, under the legal code in force at the present time in most of the United States, if not in all, a suit could not be brought against a man who calmly sat upon the bank of a stream and watched some children drown; he would not have transgressed any one's rights. Moral censure of course would be directed instantly against him, but that is beside the point, because we are looking upon the legal code as being a typically individualistic code. (The fact that such an act would lead to moral censure may be counted upon to bring it about that ultimately such a principle will be written into the legal structure of our society, either by legislation or by court decision—but this is again irrelevant.) Another and more social code of law might be conceived according to which the social group would not hesitate to make such demands upon the erstwhile utter individualist.

It is clear that Meinong's system of classification would hold in all strictness for such an individualistic society, for moral valuations in such a society would be very precise, and on the whole rather meager in extent. Very little would be

demand by way of obligation, and when one did more than was demanded, clearly it would be meritorious. As soon as the social group acquired the power to make demands upon the individual to a greater degree than under the strictly individualistic state of affairs, then the law of omissions would hold no longer in all its rigor, for there would be cases of acts whose performance would merit praise and whose omission would call forth reprehension; such in fact is the situation today in most civilized countries. Moral praise and blame are relied upon to guide and control conduct and, as a result, they are not reserved merely for the limiting cases, but tend to be employed in cases which, according to the strict analysis of Meinong, would fall more probably in the region of the correct or the permissible. A strictly individualistic society can, then, be regarded as one extreme or "limit" of the possible applications of the law of omission, a case in which the application would be strictly valid.

And when the socialization of the law and of morality has proceeded to such a point that a state of complete socialization has been reached—if one make the rather violent assumption that that is the goal of legal evolution—then again Meinong's law would come into strict operation. Under such circumstances what had formerly been permissible (e.g., sitting on the bank of the stream and watching the children drown) now would have sunk to the status of a complete wrong, and utterly reprehensible, the omission of which act (i.e., the positive jumping into the stream at the risk of life so as to effect a rescue) would be merely expected, and even required as a moral duty, and hence it would be no more than correct, and would not be considered as meriting praise—just as, nowadays, the omission of stealing is merely correct. And furthermore, under such ultimate conditions of "socialization," what is now regarded as being of sufficiently social a nature so that its performance is praiseworthy, and its omission is blameworthy, sinks to the level of the expected, i.e., its performance is merely correct, its omission becoming seriously blameworthy, even more blameworthy than now.

The nature of all of these "secular" variations in the character of the moral value of an act as we move over from a "society" of strict individualism—if one may be permitted to combine such antagonistic concepts—to our present-day society which is a mixture of individualism and socialism, and on to a society which we have designated as completely socialized (of course with no especial reference to economic theory) perhaps best may be illustrated by one or two examples as follows:

CASE	UNDER COMPLETE INDIVIDUALISM:	UNDER PRESENT-DAY RULE:	UNDER COMPLETE SOCIALIZATION:
<i>Saving lives of the children: Omission of the above act:</i>	Praiseworthy Permissible	Praiseworthy Blameworthy	Correct Blameworthy
<i>Stealing: Refusal to steal:</i>	Permissible Praiseworthy	Blameworthy Correct	Blameworthy Correct
<i>Fair competition in business: Omission of the above act:</i>	Permissible Praiseworthy	Permissible Praiseworthy	Blameworthy Correct
<i>Murder: Omission of the above act:</i>	Blameworthy Correct	Blameworthy Correct	Blameworthy Correct
<i>Extreme self-sacrifice: Omission of the above act:</i>	Praiseworthy Permissible	Praiseworthy Permissible	Praiseworthy Permissible

Other examples might be added to the above table almost without end, but these should suffice to make clear the nature of the law of omissions as we find it functioning in different sorts of society. Certain extreme acts, such as murder and extreme self sacrifice, are (in most societies) strictly subject to the law, whereas there are other cases, less extreme, which are subject to the law only under the extreme social conditions, of complete socialization at one extreme and of individualism at the other.

Having now made clear our own attitude towards Meinong's law of omissions we must return to a more detailed consideration of his own thought in application of it. He suggests that we may conveniently arrange the four classes of moral value, i.e., praiseworthy, correct, permissible, and blameworthy, along what he calls the value-line in morals. This must not be regarded as being a straight line leading from praiseworthy down to blameworthy, because praiseworthy and permissible are directly related to each other and so are correct and blameworthy. This situation may be more faithfully represented by conceiving of the value-line as being a curve or more strictly perhaps as a parabola, with the null-point at the focus, as we have sketched it in Figure 1.

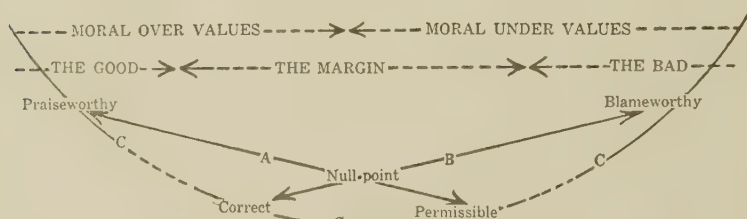


FIGURE 1

The line "A" represents the "law of omission" as operating between the praiseworthy and the permissible; the line "B" that between the blameworthy and the correct. The curve "C" is the "value-line." Meinong himself regarded this arrangement of the classes of moral values as one of his important contributions to value theory, and in his summary of his own work in *Philosophie der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen* this is one of the few phases of the *Untersuchungen* which he mentions. With regard to it he says:

Ethics is a special field of value theory. At its heart stands what I have named, without any convention, morality, the opposition between good and bad, the former either meritorious or correct, the latter either permissible or blameworthy, such that each of these four classes is bound up with the one that stands second from it in the value-line by the "law of omissions" . . .¹²

¹² Meinong, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellung*, p. 138.

In this elaborate construction of the value-line Meinong is seeking to apply the marginal analysis of the Austrian economists to the moral question. He finds, for instance, that the boundary between meritorious and correct as well as that between permissible and blameworthy is very vague and hazy; thus although one can hardly see how one act could be "more correct" than another, yet there is an infinite series of meritorious acts ranging from the little-more-than-correct to the self sacrifice of the hero and the martyr.¹³ Nevertheless it must be admitted that the correct and similarly the permissible are something more than mere points, so he concludes that the value-line is composed of two rather small, delimited portions toward the middle, and two clearly much greater, even infinitely greater portions at the extremes. The former two classes, for all practical purposes, merge into what we may designate as one single class, a marginal class between the other two, leaving us with the two general classes of the good and the bad, and the intermediate marginal class. In our diagram, Figure 1, we have indicated these breaks in the value-line by drawing it as broken at those points.

It was only when he came to the writing of what was afterwards posthumously published as his final statement of value theory that Meinong realized the intimate relationship between this law of omission and his theory of opposed emotions in his general value speculations. As we have seen, he finally defined values not merely in terms of the value judgment contingent upon a presupposed existence judgment, but also in terms of the correlative value judgment contingent upon a presupposed assumption of non-existence of the value-object. (Or in some cases the value is determined by the reverse situation, where the existence-feeling is based on an assumption and the non-existence-feeling on a judgment.) We have already examined the character of these opposed emotions, and noted their origin in the laws of habituation and fatigue. Meinong now points out the fact that the morally correct is simply a value judgment related to another and more intense value

13. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 89ff.

judgment—the blameworthy—by the fact that they constitute the two aspects of a set of opposed emotions (*Gegengefühle*).¹⁴ Thus the existence-judgment which apprises me of the fact that some one has performed a wrong act arouses in me the moral emotion of blame; as we have seen just above, however, the total value of any object is determined not merely by the existence-judgment-feeling but by the non-existence-assumption-feeling. In the case of the wrong act the non-existence of the act would mean the omission of the act, and it would be accompanied by its correlative value-emotion; i.e., the judgment of correctness. That the judgment of correctness is ordinarily a less intense value he attributes to the law of habituation—the moral code of a certain group is determined by what the group has come to expect of its members, and compliance with the code is taken as a matter of course, whereas violation is greeted with intense reprobation. And a similar argument applies to the praiseworthy—permissible.

Thus the complete moral evaluation involves (potentially) two value judgments such that the total value takes into consideration what would be the situation both in case the act is performed and in case it is omitted. It remained for Ehrenfels to avail himself of this classification in showing the interrelations between morality and ethics.

Ehrenfels, in his desire to be as empirical as possible, confines his attention at the start to the study of that culture with which we are familiar. In spite of the fact that there had accumulated recently a vast amount of data on the moral ideas of primitive peoples and other cultures, he did not feel in a position really to understand these other moralities as well as we might be expected to understand that of our own society. He adopts, consequently, as the preliminary basis of his work the moral ideas of western Christendom, with the distinct understanding that later he will generalize from this if possible and determine the principles on which all moralities and ethical systems are based. According to the moral code of contemporary western Christendom what do we find recognized as the

¹⁴ Meinong, *Zur Grundlegung*, p. 86.

highest moral law? Ehrenfels assumes that this may be formulated to begin with as we find it in the New Testament commandment: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself." Ehrenfels grants that at the present time it would seem that love of God is now falling behind the love of man, more perhaps because of a diminishing belief in the existence of God than as a result of the failure to recognize that if He exists He is more worthy of our love than is our fellow man. And in fact this tendency is preferable to the situation which eventuates from a complete separation of the love of God from the love of man, for where one's sole duty is love of God one is apt to forget his fellow man entirely, and with regard to such systems it is a fair question as to whether there is even present the love of God.

Ehrenfels tries to generalize the canon of the morality of western Christendom as being "the general love of mankind" although he realizes that this indicates in only the briefest possible way our present-day feeling dispositions and in no way describes them from the psychological viewpoint. Following a hint, perhaps, from Meinong, who had alluded inadvertently to Schopenhauer's theory of "Sympathy (*Mitleid*) and participation in the happiness of others (*Mitfreude*)" as the great world mystery, although Schopenhauer himself mentions only *Mitleid*,¹⁵ Ehrenfels attacks Schopenhauer's theory along the lines that it holds a too pessimistic view of ethical reality, the view inherited from antiquity that happiness is merely the absence of pain. This can be corrected only by the insistence that participation in the happiness of others (*Mitfreude*) is co-ordinate with sympathy (*Mitleid*) as a fundamental ethical principle. Even this would draw the boundaries too narrowly if by "general love of mankind" one understands merely the capacity to find pleasure in the happiness of others and pain in their sadness. The concept of egoism or of love of self includes much more than "happiness at one's own happiness"—even indeed if it means this in any sense. The egoist certainly desires other things besides mere happiness—honor,

¹⁵ Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 42; cf. Schopenhauer, *Preisschrift über die Grundlage der Moral (Die Beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik)*, Insel Verlag edition, III, pp. 62off.

fame, power, physical and psychic health, and many other things are objects of his striving and, as Ehrenfels had already shown, are striven for not even as being means to the goal of happiness as such, but for themselves. So, by analogy, we must widen the concept of "general love of mankind" to include the mere pleasures of human society, "laughing and play and red cheeks . . . and the merry noise of children."

One cannot say, however, that universal benevolence is as a matter of fact accredited the sole basis of morality in western Christendom, for benevolence, even when it is not universal, is also accorded its meed of praise, although it must be granted that the morality of a narrow benevolence which perhaps reaches only "me and my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more" is not regarded so highly as the more universal benevolence. Still one must concede that this is a relative matter, and that there is a sense in which the narrower benevolence is really moral, although its ethical value is generally in proportion to the extent of the circle included within it.

We cannot stop, however, even with universal and restricted benevolence. There are many other so called virtues which are the bases of various sorts of moral judgment, although coming more under the heading of the categorical moral imperatives rather than of the ethical dispositions, even though we are accustomed to refer to them as dispositions. Ehrenfels lists them as follows:

Righteousness, fidelity, honesty, sense of duty, veracity, self-respect, modesty, chastity, temperance, diligence, and love of work are all of them designations for dispositions to desire, and *ipso facto* for feelings, which are ethically more or less highly valued, and either represent modifications of benevolence from the standpoint of a desire different than love, or else have absolutely nothing to do with the love of other living beings.¹⁶

Thus Ehrenfels insists that it is utterly impossible to reduce all moral value to benevolence. All that one can say in a general way is that it is reprehensible to be moved or stirred by what are generally regarded as moral objects or values to

¹⁶ Ehrenfels, *System*, II, p. 29; cf. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," iii, p. 353.

a less extent than the average man, or to be shocked or pained by what are generally regarded as immoral values less than the average man.

Even this, however, gives us a basis of classifying the ethical values; every social group is more or less conscious both of what may be regarded as the "morality of the average man," i.e., the various moral imperatives which govern the daily life, and also of "the ethically ideal type," i.e., the ethical code which represents the ideal toward which the given community is striving or would like to strive.¹⁷ In general we praise those acts which are "above" the morality of the average man in the sense that they tend toward the ethically ideal type, and condemn those which fall "below" the average. But this moral praise becomes admiration only when the degree to which the act exceeds the average is such as to make it approach that of the ethical ideal; in so far as this is the case then it is clear that the community could not *expect* such conduct, or demand it as a moral imperative, consequently the omission of such acts, while possibly open to ethical criticism, is not subject to moral condemnation. On the other hand the demands made by the morality of the average man, being no more severe than all can be expected to meet, are such that their fulfillment merits little if any praise (as, e.g., the nourishing of one's own children) whereas their omission calls for instant and severe condemnation.¹⁸

On this basis it is clear that we can classify universal benevolence as representing the ethical ideal of western Christendom, whereas the lesser virtues, such as a more narrow benevolence (which Ehrenfels refers to as *Ipsissimus*) and the various moral imperatives cited above are to be considered as representing the moral code of the average man. Thus the act of a good Samaritan is esteemed more highly than is the perfect righteousness of a Pharisee or the honesty of a public official, even though these latter are of real moral value. And on the other hand the absence of a universal

¹⁷ Ehrenfels, *Grundbegriffe der Ethik*, p. 23; cf. Ehrenfels, *System*, II, p. 53.

¹⁸ Ehrenfels, *Grundbegriffe der Ethik*, p. 7.

benevolence—the act of the Pharisee in passing by on the other side—is condemned by most people living under the code of western Christendom less severely than would be some omission of one of the above list of moral imperatives, or other imperatives not included in the above list but of a similar character—as for instance actual dishonesty, in chastity or intemperance.

The close similarity between this theory and the classification of moral good and evil in the system of Meinong should be apparent at a glance. It will be remembered that Meinong found that the moral judgments could be classified into four large groups: the praiseworthy, the correct, the permissible, and the blameworthy, which were related to each other in pairs through the “law of omissions.” It is obvious that this law is the same as that which Ehrenfels has here derived. One could, in fact, very easily insert these instances of the four typical moral classes in their proper places in the diagram of the moral value-line (Figure 1) as denotations of the terms. The “ethical” then becomes the first (praiseworthy) of the four classes, and the “moral” is the term describing all judgments dealing with the remaining three classes.

Ehrenfels does not leave, however, his fundamental assumption of the rightness of the tenets of western Christendom as an unsupported and bare assumption. Having derived the nature of the ethical valuation by means of its study, he now turns to the question as to whether one is justified in any objective sense in making this assumption, and more particularly as to whether there are reasons leading us to believe that the principle of universal benevolence is the highest form of morality of which we know anything at all. One such reason is that this principle involves within itself the principles of morality of more primitive cultures—the warrior virtues of the Indians, for example—in that it contains all the presuppositions of these more primitive systems and unique presuppositions as well.¹⁹ Thus one finds participation in the weal and woe of others in the more primitive peoples, but it is restricted to the

¹⁹. Ehrenfels, *System*, II, pp. 63ff.

tribe or the family or the clan (*Ipsissimismus*). Again we have seen that ethical judgments of all sorts involve a good deal of analysis of complex phenomena; the person who is capable of understanding *causation* (or at least the generalizations and systematizations of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* which pass as causal relationships) has already started on the road to that power of generalization which is prerequisite to moral judgment. But many primitive peoples stop here, and thus they bring the spear to trial for having slain the man. It is only after much further development that people come to differentiate between animate and inanimate causes; and at a still higher stage of culture they come to differentiate between willful, capricious, involuntary, and dispositional causes of behavior. In fact one might readily extend Ehrenfels's argument at this point along such lines as to show that with the extension of the knowledge of abnormal psychology we are today going beyond even the moral ideas of the past generation. Thus today it is becoming more and more difficult for the State's Attorney to secure a conviction for crime if there seems to the jury to be the slightest taint of "abnormality" in the actions or antecedents of the criminal.

With this we complete the consideration of the second of the two principal phases of the treatment of moral theory in terms of value theory. Throughout our discussion we have noted that the methodology of value theory—as that of any science—is the persistent oscillation between induction and deduction, between the empirical investigation of data and the theoretical interpretation of the results. We have found that the ethical judgments of our culture are capable of interpretation in terms of an abstract and rigorous theory, a theory which can be treated with a certain algebraic precision, and yet that such interpretation does not lead us to an ethical theory out of touch with the normal judgments of every-day morality, and even with the moral standards of simpler and more "primitive" cultures than our own. So far we have looked on our problem largely as static, as being a question of classification and definition of terms, and analysis of concepts. But true

empiricism demands that we push our investigation into the genetic aspects of the total ethical situation. Even admitting that we have before us an adequate analysis and picture of the existing moral society in which we live this cannot suffice until we try to discover how this society came into being, whether it is the product of natural evolution or of teleology. In short, we must investigate whether ethical values are extrinsic values.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Are Ethical Values Extrinsic Values?

ARE ETHICAL VALUES EXTRINSIC VALUES?

THE question before us may need a slight interpretation, by restating it as follows: Are the quantitative relationships which we have seen governing ethical value such that these ethical values themselves can be made to serve other (and deeper) interests? If so, how is this to be accomplished? The answer to these two questions really depends upon the answer to a third question which must claim our first attention in the present chapter: In what way does the marginal analysis of value, which is the unique contribution of the two Austrian schools to the problem of values, and which is the basis for their quantitative determination of values, furnish us with a calculus of ethical value? Hence, the first problem of the present chapter will be: (1) the marginal calculus of ethical values. We shall then turn immediately to the second problem: (2) the psychological or genetic analysis of the marginal values of ethics.

The Marginal Calculus of Ethical Values

We have noted in the preceding chapter that both Meinong and Ehrenfels agree with the almost unanimous usage of students of ethics (although on novel premises) that the subject of the moral judgment must be the impartial and disinterested spectator—or more particularly, the environing society of such impartial spectators. Is this disinterested spectator who is, by hypothesis, the subject of the moral value judgment also the subject of the general value judgment which appraises the extrinsic worth of these ethical norms? For more convenient discussion this question can be broken up into the following two subordinate problems: (1) Can one, in fact, speak of a disinterested spectator as having any interest

in another's welfare at all, in so far as he is truly disinterested? Does this not involve us in the dilemma that *either* he has no moral interests at all, *or* that he is not disinterested? (2) Even if the disinterested spectator possessed an interest in the welfare of the community at large, would this interest in any case possess extrinsic value? Meinong turns to the first of these problems, and adopts the position of Hume, as might be expected of the man who has done more than almost anybody else to introduce Hume to the German-speaking world (rather than to combat him, as did Kant); i.e., that sympathy is not the product of the personal relationships of ourselves with our family and friends, the fundamental assumption of most "anthropological" moralities, but that it is in a certain sense independent of these relationships. Upon this assumption he can say with Hume:

As a matter of fact, if one does not place too heavy demands from the outset upon human nature, if one is contented, that is, with the lower grades of sympathetic feeling, under such circumstances one is not apt to find a man who, when he is in no way interested from the ego-centric view point, when, as the saying goes, it doesn't cost him anything, would not prefer to see that it goes better rather than worse with his fellow-man, in case he has nothing *against* him.¹

In regard to the second of the above mentioned problems, Meinong turns to the effect of the psychological laws of practice and of imitation. In the first place, if I am witness to an immoral act, even though I myself am absolutely impartial and disinterested in the particular situation, I still must know that perhaps I may be interested in the next instance when the same *Ego* is treating me as now he treats his victim. Or, in the second place, I must know that when one does an act, there is a certain tendency to facilitate the performance of this act by others who have been witnesses this time, owing to the fact of imitation, and (one might add) the resistance in his own conscience which the *Ego* had to overcome now will be lessened the next time. I may therefore feel that even though this time I am superficially disinterested, yet owing to this

¹. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 172.

contagious feature of all immorality I cannot count on being always so exempt, and therefore it is impossible to be utterly and abstractly "disinterested." For these reasons my moral judgment always possesses a general extrinsic value.

We might readily grant with Meinong that there is in each of us an ineluctible tendency toward benevolence which comes to the surface when there is no other counter-acting force; we might also agree that such an interest in the welfare of the community as a whole possesses a certain extrinsic value. It would still be a problem under certain circumstances as to just why the disinterested spectator values the altruistic impulses and acts of others and disapproves the egoistic. In other words (the point which Hume missed in his own analysis), even though I may prefer the good of others, what is to tell me whether to prefer the egoistic good of each individual as such or the altruistic good which each individual is capable of doing for others? Let us, for illustration, imagine two similar societies of approximately the same numbers and general circumstances; in the first, egoism is the rule of life and each person seeks his own good, such that if there be N members of the community, and each one is capable of amassing a single unit of good, there will be N units of good in the possession of the society as a whole. In the other community, also of N members, altruism is the rule of life, and each person is capable of doing one unit of good for others, so that again there would be a total of N units of good in the second community. The principle of benevolence of Brentano's "summation of goods" would demand merely that I prefer the rule which would yield the greater total of good, and therefore I would be left here with no further basis of distinction. In fact, as Meinong specifically points out, we have had in the course of his general theory of value reasons to believe that the disinterested spectator (whom he refers to in the course of his argument as "X") has more rather than less ground to wish that the *Ego* shall be successful in looking out for himself, rather than that he shall look out for others and they for him (inasmuch as the *Ego* would himself prefer it

this way). Thus there would seem to be no reason for the X to assign greater value to the altruistic dispositions than to the egoistic.

Meinong suggests two counter considerations, the first of which is merely to the effect that there is, as a matter of fact, no unitary disposition to egoistic will-acts, as the participation of such in altruistic will-acts testifies; what he had previously called "comparative egoism" (in contrast with "absolute egoism" or egoism in the ordinary sense of the term) is essentially a lack, and moral disapprobation is directed against this lack, as we have noted in the discussion of the law of omissions. But the "positive egoistic dispositions," as a result of which one engages in activity directly for his own interest, are not subject to moral condemnation when they function as the primary values of a will- or project-binomial. The impartial X does not *always* prefer altruistic behavior on the part of the *Ego*, although the problem remains as to why he should *ever* prefer such behavior.

The second and by all means more important argument that Meinong adduces against the theory that the X might just as well value the egoistic as the altruistic dispositions is another and probably the most striking instance in his work on value theory of the influence on his thought of the Austrian theory of economic value. His statement of it is so brief and freighted with meaning that we must quote it in full:

Without doubt the impartial X, for whom the *Ego* is as important as the *Alter*, has no ground whatever, *a priori*, to wish the defeat of the self-interest of the *Ego* in any conflict; it is certainly for him not unimportant whether the *Ego* has a sufficient supply of the dispositions which serve his own self-interest. But it is also an obvious fact that these dispositions everywhere are present in ample supply, and far beyond an ample supply, a fact which certainly cannot be supposed to be the case with respect to the altruistic dispositions. Thus the dispositions to egoistic willing can have for the *Ego*, and indirectly then for the X, no more significance than water and air; if they are as widely in evidence as these free economic goods, then it is not to be wondered at that they do not stand very high in value.²

². *Ibid.*, p. 277.

Thus it is clear from Meinong's argument that the altruistic dispositions, being relatively more scarce than the egoistic, would tend to be valued more highly, other things being equal, than the egoistic, but this preference for the altruistic is *solely* a question of this relative scarcity. He does not say that they are intrinsically of a higher value, or that they deserve or merit to be valued more highly. The whole question goes back explicitly to the Austrian law of diminishing utilities, and implicitly to his own law of the opposed feelings.

The fact that this is a comparison possible only under the condition that other things are equal indicates that it is simply another instance of the concept of the margin. In so far as the *Ego* and the *Alter* possess dispositions of equal value, the outcome of the struggle between them must be indifferent to the impartial X. This very question of the value of the dispositions involved in the moral problem raises another difficulty with regard to the capacity of the disinterested observer for serving as the subject of the moral judgment. Meinong puts this difficulty somewhat as follows: Which would this disinterested person prefer—a situation in which the *Alter* gains more and the *Ego* loses less, or a situation in which the *Alter* gains less and the *Ego* loses more? If, when faced with this question, the impartial X were to view it simply as a question of abstract values, it would seem that he would prefer the former as being a maximization of total value. But, as we have seen, it is the latter situation which typifies the conditions of moral judgment as such, and indeed the moral value is increased by decreasing what the *Alter* gains or by increasing the cost to the *Ego*. Meinong tries to meet this seeming challenge to his theory by a lengthy and largely symbolic analysis into the details of which we need hardly enter, inasmuch as Meinong seems to be guilty of a *petitio* in that he bases his first step of the proof on the "chief value formulæ"—and these constitute one of the points at issue. For if the chief value formulæ are beyond question, then this difficulty vanishes.

It is obvious, without this symbolic treatment, that the apparently greater value of the first of the above two situations is due to the fact that the *Ego* gives expression to dispositions which are intrinsically of *lower* value than are the dispositions to which the *Ego* in the second situation gives expression. This whole problem is very complex because there are really three value judgments involved: (a) the moral judgment of the impartial X on the given act; (b) a *speciously* comparable hypothetical judgment which the impartial X might pass on the total value actualized by the given act as against what might have been actualized by a different and more egoistic act. (We may call this judgment the judgment of actuality-value; it does not necessarily imply in all cases an increase in the egoistic dispositions of the actor, but simply a difference in circumstances such that a greater actuality-value is realized with a difference in dispositions.) Finally there is (c) the much more difficult ethical judgment (to which Ehrenfels was the first to call attention) which the impartial X might pass, but ordinarily fails to pass, on the ethical value of the dispositions of the *Ego* themselves, as they manifest themselves in the particular case on the assumption that this case is a marginal one; i.e., on the assumption that a slight further diminishment of the good to the *Alter* or a slight further increase of the cost to the *Ego* or of the sacrifice of the *Ego* would be sufficient to deter him from performing the act.

We have referred to the second of the three value judgments listed above as "specious" in order to call attention to it from another angle. As between the two situations in terms of which Meinong suggests that the impartial X might form this comparative judgment which seems invidious to the moral judgment, one cannot fairly judge the former situation to possess any greater actuality-value than the latter. To illustrate this let us begin with a given situation which would be a moral situation according to Meinong's definition: one in which the *Ego* sacrifices a great deal in order that the *Alter* may gain a little. Let us now increase, so to speak, the egoism of the dispositions of the *Ego*; this would imply in no sense that

as the *Ego* increased his gains the *Alter* also would gain automatically; the *Alter* might very well lose, and even lose so much that the total actuality-value would diminish. In short, the moral laws embodied in Meinong's two chief value formulæ are simply rules for measuring moral values in *marginal* situations; they are not rules for measuring or for maximizing actuality-values in these or any other situations.

We have had occasion both in connection with Meinong's discussion of egoism and altruism and the chief value formulæ (Chapter X) and also here in connection with the question as to the capacity of the disinterested spectator to function as the framer of moral judgments, to caution the reader against misunderstanding Meinong's theory as being a description of the morally valuable as such. A person who sets out deliberately to perform an act which would entail great sacrifice on his part and yield little satisfaction to the beneficiary thereof is not a highly moral person; he is either an anchorite, a masochist, or a moron. It is important to note this matter in some detail, because it was the source of some confusion at first in the mind of Ehrenfels, as a result of which we find him making efforts to clear up the difficulty which finally led to the definitive statement of this marginal calculus of ethical values. This confusion probably arose owing to Meinong's own reference to the value of the total project-binomial as its "actuality-value" (in a sense quite different from what we have defined above). This naturally gave rise to the idea that Meinong in all cases was seeking to measure moral value by this actuality-value; i.e., by the value it "actualized." (What Meinong had had in mind by "actual moral value" is the value of the dispositions of the *Ego* so far as we can estimate this value from the *actual* manifestations which the act embodies.)³

Ehrenfels criticizes his understanding of the concept of actuality-value in the following passage, which we quote in full:

. . . Let us take into consideration, for instance, the following cases: A physician good naturedly binds up the insignificant wounds of a pedestrian who has been accidentally injured by a third person. Second, the captain

³. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

and owner of a merchant ship sacrifices in a storm his entire property in order to receive and bring to land the numerous passengers of another ship in distress. Evidently the actuality value of the second action exceeds that of the first just as much as the value of the intention. Similar illustrations could be taken freely from the practice of morality. Meinong appears to have been led astray by the fact that he considers here, and also earlier in the establishment of his formulæ (*Untersuchungen*, § 25) those cases only in which a single person is affected by the moral action, although even with this limitation the converse proportionality of which he speaks is by no means corroborated without exception.⁴

If one were to rephrase Ehrenfels's argument here it would be that because the "actuality-value" of the act of the physician is less than the actuality-value of the self sacrifice of the sea-captain, that therefore he understands Meinong's formula to imply that the moral value of the former is greater than that of the latter. That Ehrenfels had completely missed the definition of actuality-value as the value of the intention is evident here where he speaks of the two values as being separate and independent. This is perhaps a natural mistake here in that he has chosen a case where "actuality-value" (i.e., the total value actualized) and "actual value" (in Meinong's sense of the actual as against the potential value of the dispositions "actualized") do happen to coincide in magnitude, or at least vary concomitantly. This total misunderstanding on the part of Ehrenfels is all the more surprising in view of the fact that on the previous page to the one quoted he had offered a derivation of Meinong's formulæ which is in complete accord with Meinong's own treatment of them. He proposes two cases, as follows:

. . . (1) A falls into the water and is about to drown. B saves him by handing him a pole which is lying on the bank. (2) A falls into the water and is about to drown. B saves him by springing into the water and pushing him to the bank, but in so doing finds death in the flood. Evidently, the value of the intention is far greater in the second case than in the first, not however the resultant or "actuality" value. For in the first case a human life is saved without the slightest injury to another; in the second case one human life is exchanged for another. In the latter case the life which was sacrificed was possibly more valuable for the surrounding community (from whose viewpoint the estimation takes place) than the one who was saved,

⁴ Ehrenfels, "The Ethical Theory of Value," p. 380.

so that the actuality value of the action can be a negative one. If one should construct a series of cases in which the life of A is saved at a continually increasing "sacrifice" of B, the result is obtained that the actuality value of the actions in question diminishes quite regularly as the moral value of the motives which prompts it increases . . .⁵

In this statement we see that Ehrenfels has grasped the significance of the value formulæ of Meinong so far, at least, as to realize that one must not confuse moral value and actuality-value. It is true he has seized upon only one half of this concept of "actuality-value," in that he here suggests the possibility of measuring moral value in terms of variations of the "sacrifice to the *Ego*" while holding the "good of the *Alter*" as constant; i.e., in all cases here as the salvation of the life of A. Furthermore, Ehrenfels does not seem quite sure whether the variation in the moral value of the act is caused by or is merely concomitant with the variation in this actuality value.

It was not until Ehrenfels approached this problem again in the writing of the second volume of his *System* that he realized that the variation in the magnitude of the actuality-value implies the possibility of measuring the ethical value. Quantity implies measurement, and measurement implies the conditions of measurement. (Here we must speak of quantity in a very broad sense, for to insist upon a narrow quantitative concept for ethical values would throw us back on some such calculus as the hedonic calculus of Bentham.) Thus if I say that A is taller than B, I have no basis for the measurement of A even if I know the height of B. In order to measure how tall A is, it is necessary to establish not only that he is, e.g., taller than B but also shorter than C; then if B and C are rather close together in height I know (within the limits of the probable error of my measurement) how tall A is. With regard to value measurement Ehrenfels sets forth these conditions as follows:

Whoever, when the occasion offers, through a relatively modest exertion saves a human life, does not thereby show that he would not equally have been ready, in case the salvation could be accomplished in no other way, to put forth a far greater exertion, perhaps even to the sacrifice of life itself.

⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 379.

But even though this possibility must be left open, still it is equally clear, that he has not by his act *given evidence* of this adequate degree of benevolence, and perhaps he may be so constituted that he would be unready to offer any greater sacrifice than actually was the case for the saving of a human life.⁶

Here we see Ehrenfels in final and complete agreement with Meinong's definition of "actual" value as against "actuality" value. That all valuation of moral acts must be accomplished in terms of the latter, however, is equally clear from the following passage which comes immediately after the passage just quoted.

. . . where goals of equal ethical value are the objects of striving, an increase in the ethical valuation follows an increase in the sacrifice which is made. Where, however, the sacrifices are equal, and only the magnitude of the ethically valued goals varies, there the ethical value in general increases with the diminution of this latter.⁷

In this passage Ehrenfels comes to a full recognition that ethical valuation is a problem of two independent variables (the value of the goal, and the sacrifice involved, which together make up the "actuality" value) and one dependent variable, the ethical value itself. He is thus forced to realize that the "actual" value manifested in the act is in most instances far from the "potential" value of the dispositions which would manifest themselves in a marginal case. We do not always live on the heights.

The Psychological Origin of Ethical Values

We have seen that the ethical values are subject strictly to the formal laws of the marginal calculus. We must see now what is the significance of this result in determining the origin of the ethical values which we know and recognize as the values of our society or our culture. Why is it that people value ethically? Or granting that they value for much the same reason that they breathe, which seems to be an answer that is gaining in popularity today, why do they value *as they do*?

⁶ Ehrenfels, *System*, II, p. 51.

⁷ *Ibid.*

It will be remembered that this is the problem with which Brentano began his researches into value theory, and it will always remain the fundamental problem of this field. Are we to be contented with some revealed or inspired code, or with some random system which happens to have survived in a struggle for existence between values? If there is or has been such a struggle what is its nature and what are the conditions for success in it? All of these questions are really variations of the one fundamental theme as to the etiology of ethical values, and to this question we now turn our undivided attention.

Ehrenfels bases his answer to this question at first upon his empirical results; i.e., upon the catalog of values which he has derived from the study of the ethical values of contemporary western Christendom. At first his investigation takes the form merely of a search for the common element in all of these values, and he immediately discovers the fact that they are all useful. He finds, however, two objections to accepting outright the ethical theories of the Utilitarians: (1) Even though one were to grant that all ethical values embodied utility, the converse need not hold: that all acts possessing even universal utility are *ipso facto* ethically good. Thus the urge to self preservation is to a certain extent *necessarily* present and of use in all societies in order that they may survive, whereas universal benevolence need not be present in order that the society survive. Nevertheless the latter is, as we have seen, of higher ethical value. (2) Furthermore, there are many people who form ethical judgments not having the slightest notion that they are of universal utility, and of course the utilitarian position demands that this knowledge shall be the motivating force in the formulation of the given ethical judgment. Ehrenfels grants that if the utilitarian theory takes cognizance of this objection its main principles may readily be accepted. He returns, however, to a more extended analysis of his first objection, stating in a preliminary way his own theory of the origin of ethical values as follows:

The first objection points to the very factor which along with the universal utility of a feeling-disposition, is important in co-determining its

ethical value:—its rarity, or in other words the insufficiency of the real supply of those dispositions in view of the demand for them, in the sense of the supply to be wished, for the good of the whole. Only those universally useful feeling-dispositions will be ethically approved the increase and wider dissemination of which among men must be desired from the standpoint of the enhancement of the good of the whole.⁸

It should be noted that he states this principle again in terms even more reminiscent of the Austrian theory of economic value, and of the argument of Meinong relative to the reasons for valuing the altruistic dispositions as against the egoistic in a later presentation of his views where he says:

Only that useful thing is at the same time valuable which with reference to the uses that it can satisfy occurs seldom, so that it needs the conserving and augmenting care of those that are interested in its existence. Thus air and—in normal circumstances—drinking water are economically valueless, in spite of their high, even immeasurable usefulness . . . In similar fashion the urge to search for food, the instinct of self-preservation, the sex impulse, the profit motive, as well as the class of actions relative to these impulses, in spite of their high and even immeasurable usefulness for the welfare of the whole, are morally valueless, because they are present in the degree and even in more than the degree which is conducive to the welfare of the whole. On the contrary benevolence, love of truth, sense of duty, righteousness, as well as the class of actions relative to them are morally valuable.⁹

If one might assume that the two classes of moral values which Ehrenfels cites here are identical with the two classes of the "altruistic" and the "egoistic" mentioned in Meinong's argument, then the two arguments would be identical. The search for food, the sex impulse, self preservation, and the profit motive are all of them certainly "positive egoistic impulses" in Meinong's sense of the term; it is not so clear, however, that in all cases benevolence, love of truth, sense of duty, and righteousness are always altruistic. The first of them, benevolence, is by definition altruistic, but the others might well be non-altruistic and still be valuable in Ehrenfels's sense of the term. The upshot of Ehrenfels's argument is that our ethical dispositions, whether they be altruistic in essence or not, are of such a nature that it is necessary to *economize* them.

⁸ Ibid., II, p. 36.

⁹ Ehrenfels, *Grundbegriffe der Ethik*, p. 5.

He does not as yet specifically recognize that this economizing really involves two separate economies: We must be economical of course in the direction of our ethical value judgments of approval towards those actions which are such as to indicate that the dispositions from which they spring are to be had among our fellow men only in limited quantities, or supply, such that their increase would redound to the common welfare. But we must also be economical of our own powers of valuation, for these powers, like all psychological and physiological powers, are subject to all of the laws of fatigue and disuse. It is true that the former economy is really dependent upon the latter, for if we were in a position to value and praise the desirable dispositions among our fellow men without stint or limit then this praise would itself lose its rarity—and hence its value and its power to influence the conduct of others. Ehrenfels describes this second economization as follows:

In the sense of an economization of energy and the highest possible performance capacity of our mental and emotional apparatus for the fulfillment of our own desires it would be necessary to insist that we turn this attention and this actual feeling interest to all those objects, but on the other hand that we restrict it to only those objects which in order that they may be present in the quantity necessary for the satisfaction of our needs call for our *active care*.¹⁰

Thus it would seem that the ethical values serve the very important function of increasing the useful and valuable dispositions in others which would otherwise not be present in adequate supply. How is it possible that this usefulness of the ethical values shall conduce to their acceptance as the values of a society unless it be that we agree with the Utilitarians that the various members of the group are conscious of this usefulness? In order to avoid reversing his judgment with regard to his second objection to the utilitarian theory Ehrenfels falls back upon his concept of the struggle for existence between values, and the fact that occasionally it happens that an intrinsic value which could not merely as such maintain itself in this struggle is reinforced by the fact that it also

¹⁰. Ehrenfels, *System*, II, p. 38.

constitutes an extrinsic value. Thus there is a constant parallelism between the ethical value of these dispositions and their extrinsic value as measured in terms of the enhancement of dispositions of service to the whole. To a certain extent this parallelism may be explained by the harmonious constitution of the human spirit which seems hardly to be able to take pleasure (intrinsically) in what is harmful (extrinsically),¹¹ or at least the contrary assumption seems to be the more complex assumption to make, and would need lengthy explanation. Ehrenfels realizes that this explanation needs further support, so he falls back upon certain other factors, partly "active" and partly "passive." Among the former are the processes of education, imitation and coercion; among the latter are the "dunkeln" factors of heredity, congenital tendencies, instincts, and spontaneous variations. As he says, if a society can manage to bring it about that those values which are extrinsically worth while can be made, by the processes of value movement, into the intrinsic values of the whole community, then they have brought into their service the most powerful psychological forces available for the realization of the ends of the (originally extrinsic) values,

. . . for he who fixes the ethical valuations of his community determines hereby its moral disposition and takes its conscience into his service.¹²

Thus the parallelism between the extrinsic and the intrinsic values of a society is largely brought about by the fact that the latter are derived by value movement from the former. But even in cases where the extrinsic value of certain intrinsic values is not even suspected Ehrenfels invokes the Darwinian theory of natural selection to bring it about that those peoples who for some reason or other—spontaneously—find an intrinsic pleasure in what is extrinsically good for them tend to survive whereas if the reverse is the case they tend to be eliminated. This might explain, e.g., the sexual and marital customs of people of the lowest levels of intelligence.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, p. 77.

¹² *Ibid.*, II, p. 79.

In §18 of *System der Werttheorie* Ehrenfels raises the question as to whether, in view of the dependence of ethically intrinsic values upon extrinsic values, the methods derived for the measurement of extrinsic values in the field of economics can be applied to the measurement of the ethical. In other words to what extent is there an analogy between ethics and economics at this point? In order to understand the extent of this analogy it is necessary to follow the exact wording of his argument in great detail, and we therefore quote it at some length:

If one compares, however, with this the . . . determining viewpoints for the employment of the concept of marginal utility, one discovers the apparent inapplicability of a weighty factor; namely, the freedom of the individual in the economic disposal of his supply of goods. The feeling-dispositions . . . of our fellows are not lifeless objects in our power, which we can make use of here or there according to our wishes. Indeed, one can raise the question whether in respect to human feeling-dispositions there is at all a sufficiently practical occasion for evaluation, inasmuch as it is beyond doubt that we are unable to increase or diminish at will the feeling-dispositions of other people as we can the supply of certain economic goods in our possession.—If, notwithstanding, our analogy is to hold, we must assure ourselves that on the one hand there is already in the objects of ethical valuation a tendency to employ their supply to the greatest possible usefulness, so that an attempt to order them economically on our part is superfluous—on the other hand that we possess the knowledge how to influence the supply of ethical value objects through the ethical valuation itself.—Both demands are, as a matter of fact, fulfilled. In order to realize this, it is first of all necessary to gain a clear concept of what is meant by the “increase” and “decrease” of the supply of ethical value objects.¹³

These two requirements are another way of expressing the fact, already noted, that ethical valuation really implies two separate economies or economizings; the one is the economy of those rare dispositions of other people which if they were increased in supply or number would redound to the good of the whole group and the other is what we have seen to be fundamental to all of Ehrenfels's value system, the economy of our own dispositions to value which is based on our limitations of psychological and physiological force, and which gives rise in the first place to the struggle for survival at the margin

¹³. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 86f.

of consciousness among ideas competing for a place in consciousness, and ultimately to the struggle for survival among values. It is this second economy which brings about the conservation if not the increase of the objects of the former economy.

He now interrupts the flow of his argument to examine in detail the ways which are open to us to increase or decrease the supply of good dispositions present in a certain community, and more particularly what this means. This may be brought about either intensively or extensively, for there is both an intensive and an extensive meaning to be attached to the expression "the quantity of moral dispositions present in a given community." As he says:

When, for example, in a given country one half of the pulpits are occupied by men of the highest moral qualifications, and the other half by conscienceless egoists, the effect on the people as a whole would be approximately the same as if all of the pulpits were occupied by men of mediocre calibre; similarly in a collection for a charitable object about the same sum would be realized from ten complete egoists and ten outspoken altruists as under comparable circumstances from twenty people moderately disposed.¹⁴

Ehrenfels admits, however, that his illustration is somewhat far-fetched, in that the ordinary processes by which our moral standards are diffused throughout the whole social group would make it very unusual for such extremes to find themselves juxtaposed without a middle group of those who are neither extreme egoists nor extreme altruists. On the other hand it would be difficult to imagine a wide extension of an average morality without the occasional appearance of persons of outstanding capacity either for good or for evil. Of course this is a question of many historic factors, and there is, for instance, a wide difference between the Rome of the Cæsars and the martyrs, and the cultural uniformity and conformity of many primitive peoples. We may therefore disregard this distinction for practical purposes in the measurement of the extrinsic values of ethics.

Returning from this digression, Ehrenfels directs his attention to the first condition he has laid down which would make

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, p. 88.

possible his suggested analogy between ethics and economics: the condition which specifies the necessity for some sort of relation or correspondence between the existence of certain dispositions in other people and the ethical value of those dispositions as judged by the acts to which they lead. The real difficulty which he faces is the possibility which he has himself suggested in his foregoing analysis: that a person *may* possess the best intentions and dispositions possible and not be called upon to exhibit them, so that they remain "hidden under a bushel"; i.e., the difference between "actual" and "potential" value. The value of a disposition is to be judged only in terms of the actual behavior to which it gives rise. Now in economics one is never faced with this problem; when one wishes, for instance, to buy a ton of coal he never raises the question as to whether, if the coal is placed in a furnace and ignited, it will do as expected and furnish heat. This is simply a question of the "technological" aspects of the economic problem, to be determined according to the calculations and specifications of the engineer. But in the case of ethical dispositions the case might seem to be different, so Ehrenfels insists that:

. . . in a certain "supply" of moral feeling-dispositions there dwells the tendency as a matter of fact to activation for the greatest possible utility. Those men, namely, who possess these dispositions will naturally employ them in those situations where they expect that those values which are the highest from the standpoint of these feeling-dispositions are to be realized. The sympathetic person will arouse himself first and with the greatest energy under those circumstances where he perceives the greatest need, the lover of truth where he thinks he recognizes the deepest error . . .¹⁵

The difficulty of which Ehrenfels complains is that even though the more valuable (i.e., more "intense") disposition would be active under circumstances where any less intense disposition would remain quiescent, nevertheless it would doubtless possess the tendency to turn its activity (i.e., the activity of its possessor) to those situations where there really was the greatest need of it. Under these circumstances it is

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, II, p. 89; cf. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," iv, p. 433.

difficult to secure a measure of these more active or intense dispositions. Ehrenfels's argument here is another way of stating the first of the two economies which we have already had occasion in the foregoing pages to mention; i.e., that economy of the praiseworthy feeling dispositions without which they might be scattered and "wasted" on all sorts of worthy and unworthy objects, with the result that they would not be of any significance from the viewpoint of the welfare of the whole. This is the aspect of the ethical value object which corresponds (in the simile) to the *utility* of the economic good.

The second condition which he laid down as prerequisite to the maintenance of his analogy was that we should possess the adequate knowledge how to influence the supply of these ethically valuable dispositions through the processes of ethical valuation. This corresponds in the analogy to the *scarcity* of the economic good, as expressed, in the Austrian theory, in the influence of the buyer on the market, in the sense that the increase in the buyer's estimate of the value of an object (his subjective price)—as manifested in a willingness to pay a higher objective price—immediately results, ordinarily, in the stimulation of additional sellers or producers who had hitherto not found the prevailing price level a sufficient inducement, with the direct result of increasing the supply of the good in question. Do our ethical valuations operate in the same way, or have a similar effect? Ehrenfels asserts that this is the case, and that the economic law of diminishing utility holds strictly also for ethics, for he insists that

. . . with the step-wise increase of the "supply" (analogous to the economic field) there supervenes not an *equivalent* but rather a steadily *diminishing* increase of the total utility, so that the concept of *marginal utility* . . . seems in principle to be applicable.¹⁶

He admits at once that the analogy breaks down from one viewpoint, in that in economics one deals with possession and ownership of the goods, whereas in ethics this is the case only in a certain metaphorical sense. He does not pursue this inquiry

¹⁶. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 89f.

any further in the *System der Werttheorie*, but in his earlier formulation of the argument he had an additional page or so of further justification of the analogy, based on the general assumption that these ethically praiseworthy dispositions are really to be regarded as a sort of quasi-possession of everybody concerned.

That this analogy is subject to attack at many vulnerable points is beyond dispute, and we must not, therefore, take it as more than it professes to be: a highly suggestive analogy. From the constructive viewpoint, however, one is justified in insisting that it calls attention very forcibly to the real nature of all valuation, whether economic or ethical. It all comes from the inevitable limitations in the world *as we know it*, both subjective and objective limitations. He nowhere drops into any of the obvious tautologies such as that we value because we want certain things. For him valuation is a result and not a cause, and an inevitable result, flowing from the psychological laws of the narrowness of consciousness, of the reinforcement of ideas in their struggle for survival when they are accompanied in consciousness by an enhancement of happiness, and finally of the two sorts of economizing which result in the ethical situation and which give us our ethical values. In short, Ehrenfels's argument is that if one were to grant that individuals of any nation or tribe of men whatever were to have the same restrictions and limitations in the functioning of their psychological mechanisms we should find, as a result of the laws of biological evolution and the struggle for survival between values that they would develop a value system which, while it might well differ from ours in details, would be essentially the same in so far as the functioning of the general law of marginal serviceability is concerned.

With this result he is in a position to validate the challenge to the absolutist in value theory with which he had replied to the theories of Brentano. One can realize the force of Ehrenfels's argument perhaps most easily by making the assumption that in the natural course of events or through the operation of the mysterious "natural tendencies" of all individuals the

best possible fulfillment of all wishes was achieved; i.e., a situation was realized in which there never was a struggle for survival on the part of values, or rather in which such a struggle would be superfluous, and furthermore the welfare of the whole always was served automatically as well as possible owing to the dispositions of the people. Under such circumstances it is obvious that ethics, at least as we know it, would be quite superfluous, at least as an extrinsic good; and as an intrinsic good, in so far as it possessed the tendency to alter this best-possible of all systems of dispositional values, it would be positively an extrinsic disutility, and since, as we have seen, ethics is a system of extrinsic values which have acquired the force of intrinsic values through "value movement" it would tend to disappear under such conditions.

There is little more to say in explanation of the formal conditions which govern the judgments of good and bad (ethics); ethical principles are not, however, merely abstract and formal rules, but can be employed in the actual measurement of the goodness and badness of deeds in the actual world. Such measurement appertains, however, not to ethics as such, but to the sister science of morality. We therefore turn to the consideration of the factors which modify or affect the moral judgment.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Factors of the Moral Judgment

XIII

FACTORS OF THE MORAL JUDGMENT

THE moral judgment as we find it in every-day life must not be regarded as being solely the product of the purely moral attitude and disposition of mind as Meinong and Ehrenfels have analyzed them. To say this would be tantamount to asserting that the moral judgment came to expression without undergoing any perturbation from the innumerable non-moral psychological forces and influences which are continually playing upon every active mind. Both Meinong and Ehrenfels have devoted considerable thought to the study of these factors, because it is necessary to know them in order that we may understand the moral judgment as we actually find it in daily life and may be able to eliminate these relatively extraneous forces in order to determine what is the truly moral judgment in a given situation.

Moral Responsibility

In Chapter IV of Part Two of his *Untersuchungen* Meinong raises the question as to the extent to which the values that result from his theoretical discussion as a matter of empirical fact undergo modification in view of the many circumstances which govern our judgments of a moral act. Such a judgment may be designated as the assignment of responsibility for the act, for it is a fundamental canon of western European morality that "responsibility"—i.e., voluntary performance of the act with full knowledge of its consequences—is prerequisite for any moral judgment thereon. There are two aspects to this assignment of responsibility, as we shall see: the "imputation" of responsibility, and the "attribution" of responsibility. It is in such judgments, that, ultimately, the particular value judgment finds expression, for all of the cases which a theoretical

study of morality may present are only the "limiting cases" for the actual judgment as arrived at under all of the limitations of psychological vagrancies and the consideration of "mitigating" and "incriminating" circumstances. The purely theoretical moral judgment can be regarded as at most a casuistical norm for the formation of actual moral judgments, "other things being equal." As both Meinong and Ehrenfels agree, with other students of morality, all moral judgments are directed to acts, and through acts to the will and the dispositions behind the act. There are, however, many acts which by their very nature are to be excluded from any moral valuation. Among them Meinong cites:¹

A. Cases where no act of willing is involved—as for instance when a person fails to go somewhere because he is lame, or omits to do something because he is asleep or unconscious or in some other way obviously incapacitated. Also one may mention cases where one is under the more or less complete control or influence of some instinctive reaction to the given situation, although there is here of course the question as to whether it is not possible to counter-act and overcome the instinctive tendency. Presumably under this heading, also, would fall most naturally the cases where a person pleads thoughtlessness for a given offense; the question may naturally be raised, and is extremely difficult to answer, as to the degree to which this excuse may be accepted, or should modify the moral judgment. When a person pleads that "he didn't mean to do it" it is perhaps proper to reply that the moral censure attaching to the act would be increased manifold if one believed that he had intended to do what he professes to have done unintentionally. This, however, is a consideration primarily of importance in the moral education of children, to enforce upon them the perfectly general maxim that it is the primary duty of the moral person to use all of his intelligence and foresight in the avoidance of harmful acts.

B. Cases where one actually wills, but something else happens than that which was willed, or was foreseen; whether

¹ Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 196ff; the numbering of the cases has been somewhat altered.

this occurs as a result of unforeseeable circumstances which have intervened, or is due to a temporary or permanent lack of foresight, is of no consequence here. Error, ignorance and intellectual incompetence all come under this heading in that they all contribute to lessening the imputation of responsibility to the agent, thus lessening the praise or blame he receives.

C. Cases where one wills and the object willed results, but where the willing cannot be described as moral, in view of the fact that it is the result of partiality or of something other than that disinterested sympathy which is the prerequisite for the truly moral will. In cases where these special interests are so powerful as completely to overpower the moral will we can speak of a complete elimination of the possibility of the attribution of moral responsibility (and hence of blame); but since this is a fact very difficult to determine, one can ordinarily at most speak of only a partial elimination of blame on this score. We can classify these factors of this third group best as extra-subjective and intra-subjective.

I. The extra-subjective factors can be described as occasion and influence.

Under *occasion* Meinong understands that which people refer to when the popular adage says, e.g., that the occasion makes the thief. The more the temptation, the less the guilt, and in the occasions of the extreme provocation we scarcely condemn at all.

Under *influence* the question as to whether the tempter seduces the transgressor voluntarily or not is of secondary importance. Here again we deal with those cases of all degrees of intensity from mere temptation to the "irresistible compulsion" of the hypnotizer or the person of tremendous influence.

II. Meinong then tries to subsume the manifold complexity of the intra-subjective factors under the following heads:

1. The intensity of the emotion of value of the *Ego* for the good of the *Alter*. People vary enormously in their capacity for emotions of all sorts, and *per consequens* in their capacity

for value emotions. Thus there are many stern and repressed natures for whom it seems especially easy to be virtuous, and a breach of the code by such a person is regarded as noteworthy—and hence through this relative rarity draws to itself perhaps more than its just share of moral reprobation—while we are rather willing to pardon the vagrancies of the genius and the artist because we know that they live lives which are much more intense emotionally. As a sub-class under this heading might be added the special obligations under which a particular person feels himself to be because of his situation, leading him to be much more responsive emotionally to moral situations of a particular type. Examples of this would be the loyalty of the person on duty, *esprit de corps*, and the fact that *noblesse oblige*.

2. The personal relations of the actor to the person affected, as influencing his emotional responsiveness. Close personal relations, in that they increase this responsiveness, lessen the value of the moral act, as well as the offensiveness of the wrongful act—although Meinong refuses to consider here such extreme cases as patricide and treachery, which by their very extremeness call more than a normal amount of censure down upon their perpetrator.

3. The capacity of the subject for moral responsibility must be considered also; this is of course primarily a question of intelligence, but also the emotions must be included. Meinong insists that such pathological phenomena as “moral insanity” must not be regarded as hindrances to the attribution of moral responsibility, for as he explains a little later, the act of a moral imbecile remains, from the moral viewpoint, exactly what it was, and can best be described in the strictly moral terminology. This does not mean that he refuses to leave room in his system for sympathy and kindly treatment for the criminally insane, when such treatment is really in order, for, as he says, sympathy itself is always an object of morality.

4. The psychic past of the actor is also a factor; here enters the effect of the laws of habituation and custom. Thus we are

more severe with the recidivist, for we feel that his habitual criminal life indicates a settled tendency which is more condemnable than the sudden and temporary lapse of a "first offender." It must be remembered, on the other hand, that the oft-repeated offenses of the old offender have made resistance to temptation doubly difficult for him; this does not tend to lessen the responsibility from the moral viewpoint, but generally does and should increase our sympathy for him—a sympathy, however, which should manifest itself in other ways than a mawkish sentimentality which would lessen the rigors of punishment.

5. The time factor must also be considered, and this from two viewpoints. In the first place the wrongful disposition which is only temporary—as one may conclude from the fact that the emotional stress under which the wrongful act was committed was itself transitory—escapes condemnation more readily than the settled and permanent disposition, especially if this fact of temporary abnormality is manifested by apparently genuine repentance and regret. (This aspect of the temporal factor is, of course, very closely related to number 4, above.) In the second place, the longer the interval of time which has intervened between the act and the moral judgment, the less severe or intense the judgment is apt to be; there are two reasons for this, although Meinong cites only one. He bases this on the fact that after a lapse of time we are not so sure that the individual still remains as wicked (or good) as the act under consideration would lead us to believe he was at the time he committed it. What Meinong fails to note is the effect of the lapse of time on the value-judge himself, for one cannot have as intense an interest in something which occurred a long time ago—provided we may safely regard it as a "closed incident" with no effects still to be hoped or feared. Whether there are cases of moral potential judgment which never come to expression but which lapse completely—or are "outlawed" in the legal terminology—on account of these time factors is difficult to determine, but it is certain that there are some derelictions which are never pardoned no matter how long the lapse of time.

Meinong then turns to the problem of making more specific the distinction between the imputation of character (*Anrechnung*) to an individual and the attribution of responsibility (*Zurechnung*) to him under the given circumstances. Thus the various intra-subjective and extra-subjective forces listed above may bring about a variation in the intensity of my desire for the welfare of others—which, as we have seen, is the ultimate object of the moral judgment. This ultimately raises the question as to the “inner moral dispositions” of the individual, which are the objects of praise and blame. These dispositions cannot be determined from any one situation, but must be generalized from our knowledge of the behavior of the individual under a great variety of circumstances; in this way we distinguish between the “actual” and the “potential” value of these dispositions; Meinong calls this imputation of character *Anrechnung*.

In addition to this we are frequently faced with the problem as to the extent to which a person of given moral dispositions has been influenced in his conduct in a particular situation by various factors. Thus one person of relatively weak moral tendencies and dispositions may be strongly influenced by a good person to do the right thing (thus winning great moral approbation) whereas another person, in spite of the fact that he possesses approximately the same dispositions, may be “left alone” and, lacking encouragement in the right, may go wrong. The determination of the “perturbing” effect of external forces is what Meinong calls attribution of responsibility (*Zurechnung*).

Meinong employs the illustration of a loaded dice, which may be thrown in a special way so as to bring it down on a certain face, or it may be allowed to fall freely; also there may be variation in the intentional loading of the dice, such that some dice (unloaded) will have an even chance of landing on any one of their six faces, whereas others will persistently tend to fall on a certain face. The extent of the “loading” of the dice would represent the imputation of character (*Anrechnung*) whereas that of the “throwing” of the dice would represent the attribution of responsibility (*Zurechnung*).

Both imputation of character and attribution of responsibility are generalizations from our experiences with given individuals; they can perhaps best be distinguished from a methodological viewpoint as follows: Imputation of character, as we have said, comes from an intimate and long-standing acquaintance with a given individual. It must involve also a comparison of the character of this individual with that of many others. Thus there are two steps in the complete imputation of character: (1) the observation of this individual under a great variety of circumstances; (2) the observation of this individual in comparison with others having a great difference of dispositions, for the most part unknown, under similar circumstances. The first gives us what we might call "positive" or "immediate" imputation, the second "relative" imputation. Attribution of responsibility is the attempt to determine to what extent the actual behavior of the individual under the given circumstances gives us an insight into his real dispositions. It also involves two steps, as follows: (1) the observation of many individuals of *approximately the same dispositions* under a great variety of circumstances, and (2) the observation of many individuals of different but *known* dispositions under a great variety of circumstances. According to these methodological differences it is evident that the imputation of character is vastly easier than is the *adequate* attribution of responsibility. So much so is this the case that undoubtedly more primitive peoples have been able to perform it while failing in performance of the latter; from this difference arises, perhaps, the wide-spread belief in "the unchangeability of human nature" and even in the freedom of the will; philosophical doctrines of personalism, religious dogmas of a personal God, and even the more primitive beliefs in animism might spring from this difference.

We must, however, return from this digression to a discussion of Meinong's own view. He points out that it is with reference to this twofold nature of the moral judgment that we can say that we are "disappointed in a certain person," for this implies a rather complete imputation, if not attribution. The moral judgment concerns itself solely with the

actual conduct at the moment, although in view of this analysis we are justified in taking into consideration the moral character and capacities of the individual in forming our judgment. Nor need this moral judgment be the product solely of the intellect, for in many cases if not in most the emotions will play a large if not dominant rôle in ultimately determining our moral judgments of our fellow men. But whether intellectual or emotional, we judge, in general, the tree by its fruits, but one must also take into consideration such factors as wind and weather, sun and rain, in appraising the value of the crop and one must also keep in mind the age and condition of the tree itself. In other words:

. . . the value of the personality is just so much the greater, the more valuable the given act is, and the more this act may be regarded as the emanation from the personality.²

Free Will vs. Determinism

Meinong next turns to the question of free-will, or freedom, with the remark that it may seem strange to many to have discussed at such length the subject of responsibility without as yet considering freedom. He insists, however, that, so far as the question of free-will *vs.* determinism is concerned he must consider this as closed, for no one who accepts the causal-law can be other than a determinist. Nevertheless he does feel that the concept of freedom demands a certain analysis, which we shall present as briefly as possible, inasmuch as it is not vital either to his value theory or to his moral theory. The outstanding characteristic of this discussion is Meinong's refusal to consider the problem of free-will on purely abstract grounds, but he assumes that the question arises only when a course of action has been begun and it is found in some instances that it encounters obstacles, inner or outer. The distinction between the outer and the inner hindrances gives rise to the two problems of the freedom of action and the

². *Ibid.*, p. 206.

freedom of willing proper, but they are related very intimately to each other. Under each head there are four possibilities, as follows:

For freedom of action:

- (1) That I strive, but am prevented by some hindrance.
- (2) That I do not strive, but that if I did, I would be prevented.
- (3) That I strive, and there is no hindrance to prevent me from succeeding.
- (4) That I do not strive, but that if I did, I would find no hindrance to prevent me from succeeding.

For freedom of will:

- (1) That I wish, but through some "inner" obstacle I am prevented from forming the requisite will. In illustration of this case Meinong cites the instance of one who might wish to become an artist but who knows in his own mind that he does not possess the requisite talents, and who therefore cannot bring himself to perform the definite acts and exert the necessary will power to achieve his end.
- (2) That I do not wish, but if I did, I would speedily discover that I could not will effectively. Meinong here cites the case of one who, at night within a walled town, does not even form the wish to be without the gates, because he knows that this is impossible. Here it would seem that one was concerned more with an "outer" compulsion, although of course it is possible to imagine "inner" compulsions on the analogy of case 1 above, e.g., "inferiority complexes."

(3) That I wish, and there being no obstruction, I will. This is the typical case of freedom of will.

(4) That I do not wish, but if I did, I would find no obstruction. This raises the question of the potential freedom of one who, while perfectly free to take a stroll, remains at home. Does the fact that he remains at home in any sense constitute a "will not to take a stroll"? One must be careful here not to confuse the absence of a will-act with the existence of a "negative" will or "nolition."

Meinong refuses, however, to see in "indeterministic freedom" a correct formulation of the concept of freedom, for freedom from coercion is quite a different thing from a freedom to will without any anterior causation or necessity. For all practical purposes he concludes that the concept of freedom of will in the traditional sense can very well give way to his concept of "spontaneity."

Ehrenfels objected to this treatment of freedom, first on the grounds that Meinong has confined himself to the external coercions and has neglected the inner tendencies which—if the external factors were absent—would result in producing the correct moral act. In this criticism it would seem that Ehrenfels has somewhat misunderstood Meinong's concept of spontaneity, for of it he says:

One acts spontaneously who succumbs to the force of passion . . .³

"Dispositional spontaneity" in Meinong's use of the term means something else than mere "succumbing to the passions." The quite evident fact, which anyone can verify from a study of cases similar to those which Meinong has cited, is that an observable difference is to be noted in the characteristic reactions of different people to the pressure and "coercion" of the environment. It is only in terms of such concrete data that intelligible discussion can proceed.⁴

Ehrenfels's second objection to Meinong's treatment of the problem of determinism is better taken, in that he insists that when Meinong suggests that a true determinist may, for practical reasons, regret his deterministic theories in view of the inhibition of the moral will which may result therefrom, and may even insist that "for practical purposes" one may hold to the indeterministic theory, this really represents an *ignoratio*. In short, Ehrenfels is what one might refer to as a "hard" determinist. It is only natural, therefore, that one should expect to find in Ehrenfels's study of morality much more attention given to the problem of the factors influencing moral

³ Ehrenfels, "The Ethical Theory of Value," p. 383.

⁴ Cf. Meinong, *Zum Erweise des allgemeinen Kausalgesetzes*, pp. 91f.

conduct, and this is indeed the case. At this point we see constant evidence of the influence on his thought of the evolutionary theories regnant during the last decades of the last century. In this respect he differs from Brentano, who, according to Kraus, never accepted the evolutionary explanation, although he never definitely opposed it in his published work.⁵ Ehrenfels, however, was thoroughly convinced of the adequacy of the Darwinian explanation. We have evidence of this in a small twenty-page pamphlet, published without date, "Werdende Moralität." This was a polemic against the moral theories of the "ultra-conservative Christianity" of a Leo Tolstoy, against the state-socialism of Bismarck and the social-democratic utopianism of Bebel, the platitudinous inconsequence of the Utilitarians, and the lip-service of the professional clergy and the bourgeoisie for an out-grown code of morals, but above all it was an attack upon the pseudo-evolutionism of Friedrich Nietzsche. Inevitably this was far too large a field to cover in a pamphlet, and no one could be expected to find in it more than a brief summary of the ethical thought of the author; in a letter to the present writer Professor Ehrenfels insists that it contains no more than embryonic hints of his moral theories. Some of these hints are, however, extremely significant, as for instance, that morals do change and evolve, that just as the morality of primitive Christianity was at first a new force in the world, and was itself later effectively (although not "officially") superseded by the code of honor of medieval feudalism, so today there are other forces at work bringing about the "morality of the future."

We must, however, turn to Ehrenfels's larger works to appreciate his theory of the functioning of determinism in morality, and particularly the way in which evolutionary processes bring about changes not only in moral values but in all values as well. At the outset it should be noted that Ehrenfels is such a complete determinist that he does not feel it necessary even to raise the question of "spontaneity" and the "attribution of responsibility" which has so occupied

⁵. Kraus, *Franz Brentano*, p. 76.

Meinong. The desires which an individual experiences come so inevitably as the result of the many forces playing on him that Ehrenfels uses again and again the figure of water seeking its own level. He insists that the fundamental value object of the ethicist is not the act of the moral agent but the disposition from which the act springs. In fact this derivation of value from dispositions is perfectly in keeping with his theory of the origin of values in the relative permanence of an idea in consciousness (as we have seen, the basis of all desire in his theory) in that the dispositions, or pre-dispositions, of the subject are fundamental in lending to those ideas toward which they are disposed the feeling-reinforcement which enables them to win in the struggle for survival between ideas at the margin of consciousness. And, as we have seen, an object possesses value only if it is desired or is desirable. This involves a strict relativity as far as the value object is concerned, even though it seems to run counter to the popular notion that value represents something absolute, a sort of axiological *Ding an Sich*. As he says:

Even philosophy at the beginning followed this urge for objectification, which transfers the content of the inner experience . . . to the thing itself as absolutely determinant; and endeavored to discover that which had *value in itself*—with about as much justification as one might claim in contending whether the direction toward the north pole or that toward the south pole pointed upwards in itself, or whether the earth in itself was a large body or a small body.⁶

Value Movement; Causes

One must not be surprised by this insistence upon the fact that values change, and that what is good today is bad tomorrow, for if one has rightly understood his insistence upon the relativity of value, it would be far more surprising if one were to assume fixed values. In cases where one is allowed to speak of values as such, entirely freed from this personal reference, this is merely because it is something which for the time being has such a universal acknowledgement of value that

⁶. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," i, p. 87.

this abstraction is permissible.⁷ As a matter of terminological uniformity, however, we must be careful not to speak of every case where a value changes for a particular individual or for a short period of time as a "value movement"; Ehrenfels insists that we restrict this latter term to cases where a relatively permanent change takes place—such as an economist might designate as a "secular variation."

The fact that values "as such" can change and are relative involves Ehrenfels in a discussion as to the actual changes of this sort which are typical, and as to the causes for these changes. We shall first examine the dynamic aspects of this theory, the actual changes which take place and their causes; after this we shall try to present briefly Ehrenfels's classification of the static aspects of this value movement, the end-results, and the values which represent the different types of equilibrium in this dynamic world of value evolution.

Certain types of value movement are of such frequent occurrence and are so significant for an understanding of the whole problem that they may be singled out for detailed mention. (1) The first of these we may trace to congenital feeling-dispositions, either inherited or not (depending upon their resemblance to those of the parents). (2) The second are to be traced to the changes which inevitably come with the organic development of the individual—with the changes, e.g., which are typical of adolescence, maturity, senescence, etc. In each of the "seven ages of man" a new value scale is dominant, if one puts the matter very crudely. (3) This leaves as a third possible "catch-all" miscellaneous class that of the "spontaneous variations," which Ehrenfels frankly recognizes to be merely a name for our total ignorance of the real nature of many of the variations of individual values. These three classes of individual value movement together may be summarized as being the types of which we know very little if anything. In the terms of modern psychology one would not be far wrong in designating these three types as the Congenital, the Instinctive, and the Learned or Habitual, the last

⁷ *Ibid.*, ii, pp. 208f.

of which is to be understood in its broadest signification as the mental behavior which is not to be traced to the other two.

These "dunkeln" factors do not, however, complete the list of the factors which direct and even initiate value movement, and there are many which are much better known—or were thought to be so at the time that Ehrenfels was writing—owing to the fact that they can easily be traced back to some fundamental law of association or of physiological psychology. We may classify these "better known" factors under the two general heads of individual and social. Among the former the first that we encounter is "habituation" (*Gewöhnheit*), which is really a strictly psychological formulation of what the Austrian economists were wont to refer to as the law of diminishing utility. In view of Ehrenfels's explanation of the possible exceptions to this general rule we may quote his discussion of it at some length:

1. *Habituation*.—If an impression which is accompanied by an emotion of pleasure or pain is often repeated, then the emotion in almost all cases diminishes in intensity. This psychic fact is so well known in ordinary practical life that a reference to instances is scarcely necessary. Apparently contrary instances—that one only gradually learns to value certain impressions highly—can be very well explained by the fact that one at first acquires only gradually the capacity to win from an outer event (as the dying away of a musical note) a pleasurable psychical experience . . .⁸

Here he offers an explanation for what might be regarded otherwise as a disproof of his essentially Austrian theory of values. Nor does he have greater difficulty in finding other explanations for other cases where the emotions do not diminish with the repetition of the outer stimulus or impression; he mentions, e.g., the case of the mountain-climber whose foot slips from under him, and for whom the occurrence of this event the hundredth time possesses a much greater feeling accompaniment than the first time it occurs owing to the accumulation of fatigue products. Or again the case of the increasing pleasure in learning to smoke is to be accounted for by the real diminution of the negative feelings and a

⁸ Ibid., ii, p. 214; cf. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, p. 120.

diminution of the positive feelings at a slower rate, the whole being accompanied by the building up of new physiological reactions of various sorts which completely change the total situation. The interesting thing with respect to all of these "counter instances" and their respective explanations is that if one were to multiply them sufficiently, and there would seem to be little doubt but that this can be done almost *ad infinitum*, one would finally be forced to the conclusion that every case of habituation of this sort is to be explained on its own grounds—and the fine generality of the Austrian law of the diminution of the feeling accompaniment with repetition of the stimulus would vanish. At the most Ehrenfels is able to suggest that habituation has the two general functions of dulling the intensity of the feelings, whether positive or negative, and creating needs. There is a sort of negative aspect of the law of habituation which is ordinarily omitted from its formulation; i.e., that the suspension of an impression or experience, to which we are so habituated as to pay no attention to it at all, occasions a feeling tone, pleasant or unpleasant as the case may be. Thus the prisoner whose cell has become his home is happy upon his release, even though he has not fretted at his confinement or even seemed to notice it. This special case may be termed "Acquiescence" (*Entwöhnung*).

The ordinary laws of association and attention may be called on to account for the other individual factors in value movement. Thus the old saying that bringers of bad news are bad is really based upon the fact that when two experiences occur simultaneously, one of which has a strong feeling tone as an accompaniment, this feeling tone speedily attaches itself to the other. Much sentimentality would be impossible without this fact. Or again, we inevitably associate the feeling tone which accompanies a given result with its cause. And finally, auto-suggestion (as, e.g., the conviction that we do or do not possess such and such feeling dispositions, say, for the appreciation of certain sorts of music or architecture) may be counted on in many cases to modify our general emotional reaction to a situation; and the fact that we frequently possess a lively desire that we may experience certain sorts of value

emotion (as e.g., our admiration for courage, virtue, etc.) is the basis of the appeal made by the Church, the teller of hero-sagas, and other agencies in moral education.

Value movement is also to be traced to certain over-individual factors, which, in so far as they are social, may be classified as follows: compulsion, the influence of example, and direct suggestion. Compulsion—other than sheer physical coercion and restraint—is based on the fact that if one always associates a certain type of behavior with a certain definite reward or punishment, which may be taken as an intrinsic value itself, then by the process of habituation the emotional reaction to the collateral value will come to attach itself to the stimulus directly, thus leading to the desired behavior without the reward (along lines later investigated by Pavlov). There are of course certain obvious limitations to the changing of values by compulsion, especially in cases where the severity of the punishment leads not to the performance of the desired act but to some form of revolt against the authority imposing the punishment, as Meinong had also pointed out in his discussion of duty. In any case there is no real value movement as long as the reward must be offered in order to secure the given behavior, but only when the desirability of the reward has come to attach itself to the act as such, thus making it appear intrinsically desirable. The influence of example can be traced, according to Ehrenfels, to the instinct of imitation (*Nachahmungstrieb*), but inasmuch as this instinct is now seriously called in question by leading psychologists we may merely note that Ehrenfels does not place so much reliance upon the psychology of instinct as upon his analysis of such evident phenomena as that when we see someone make a gesture of disgust we find ourselves experiencing an incipient feeling of disgust. With regard to the third type of the influence of one man on another, suggestion, all we need to note here is that this subject is as yet so completely the domain of scientific dispute that the statement of Ehrenfels's position with regard to it would scarcely have value except as historical data.

Although the actual theories with regard to these problems which were advanced by Ehrenfels must undergo serious modification if one were to cling to his analysis, it is sufficient for us to note here that in the specification of these three general means which society may employ in modifying and controlling the movement of values (and undoubtedly the list might be extended greatly) he has freed his theory of value movement from what might otherwise be regarded as too strictly and narrowly an evolutionary or biological explanation. It is true that inheritance and temperament play a large—if dubious—part in the movement of values. But if one calls to mind the national-heroes, the rulers, the founders of religions, the great artists and philosophers who have exerted a dominant influence in fixing the development of their peoples and of all peoples, it will be clear that it is possible for a man to pass on his influence upon the values of his day and of the future without necessarily being dependent upon his own immediate descendants. And it is thus, indeed, that the ideals of hermits and celibates must be passed on if at all. The biological and the social "inheritance" of values constitute then, largely, the dynamics of the movement of values, the means by which the variations are effected. In view of this even though the anthropologists do discover that there are many codes and scales of value in other and "backward" parts of the world, this should not appear as other than psychological commonplace. We should in fact, be very surprised if there were no such value movement.

Value Movement; Sequences

We may also analyze value movement as a static phenomenon, from the viewpoint of the relations of the various factors involved in it. If we look upon the relation of the intrinsic to the extrinsic value we see that the outstanding characteristic here is the causal sequence designated under the terms "means" and "ends." Ehrenfels finds that in every such sequence there are not two but three significant stages: the means to the end, the foreseen or actively desired end, and the ultimate or unforeseen result. He groups these three stages together under

the general name of goal-sequence (*Zielfolge*), although he realizes—as we discover from a foot-note—that this designation may lead to misunderstanding owing to the connotation of *purpose* ordinarily associated with goal (*Ziel*). In his usage this term is to contain at most only a partial teleological significance, as we shall see, for as he says:

Only the first two must be foreseen by the actor . . .⁹

Goal-sequence is to be regarded then as the abstraction and generalization of the universal or oft-repeated aspects of all such typical chains of willed or partially willed action and result. The significance of goal-sequence in value theory, however, is to be found in the fact that this concept permits us to characterize a great many value movements which are second only in importance to the influence of man on man, although it is a way of looking at values from the static or analytic viewpoint rather than from the dynamic. Ehrenfels classifies these movements under four large heads: value movement (1) *downwards*, i.e., from the valuation of the end as intrinsic value to the valuation of the means to this end as the intrinsic value, or from the valuation of the ultimate result to the valuation of the end or of the means; (2) *upwards*, i.e., the reverse of the former movement, as e.g., from the valuation of the means to the valuation of the end; (3) *side-wards*, i.e., from the valuation of one end to the valuation of an object which has many of the characteristics of a true end but which is essentially collateral—as for instance when a man seeks warmth as an end but in order to gain this end drinks alcohol which gives him the sensation of warmth while really robbing him of the chance to gain his real end; (4) *inwards*, i.e., from valuation of a vaguely conceived end to the valuation of that part of this end which is clearly perceived to be the real end. With regard to the last of these typical value movements it may be noted that one could hardly expect a value movement *outwards* because after one has become

⁹. *Ibid.*, ii, p. 227.

clearly conscious of what he wishes he does not lose this consciousness in a return to his former vagueness and uncertainty.

In order that one may understand Ehrenfels's concept of value movement clearly, he calls attention to the fact that it must not be thought of as a movement like that of a solid body, but more as the movement of a flame which when it enkindles another part of the structure which is burning is not compelled to abandon that part where it is already burning. So with values, we can continue with the old valuations at the same time that we take over the new. Thus many times a person learns to value as an intrinsic value the object which at first he merely valued as means to some other end, but this does not prevent him from continuing to value the former end.

Value movement downwards is the result of the law of association and of habituation, as well as of the "transference of emotion" from the pleasure of attaining the end to the means whereby the end is attained. Naturally this process can take place only gradually, but no matter how gradually it occurs or how long it continues there is a limit beyond which it cannot go, namely, that the value of the newly created intrinsic values—which he calls "derived values"—cannot exceed in value their value as extrinsic means to the end, unless some other force comes into play. Thus among a pastoral people horse-back riding is an extrinsic value, and even though it come gradually to possess an intrinsic value, this value in so far as it is the product of a value movement downwards, cannot be greater than was the value of this exercise as a means to the end of "riding herd." Such a process of value movement can occupy many generations for its completion, and in this case we have "successive" derived values, whereas when it occurs all within the life experience of a single individual we have "individual" derived values. It may very well be that Ehrenfels was influenced in his concept of derived values by the thought of Brentano, for in the latter's *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis* we find the following passage:

Ought we to say that whatever is loved and is capable of being loved is worthy of love and is good? This is manifestly untrue, and it is almost inconceivable that some have fallen into this error. One loves what another hates, and, in accordance with a well known psychological law . . . it often happens that what at first was desired merely as a means to something else, comes at last from habit to be desired for its own sake. In such a way the miser is irrationally led to heap up riches and even to sacrifice himself for their sake.¹⁰

The value movement upwards is more difficult to explain, in view of the fact that the ultimate results of an action are for the most part unforeseen, and frequently remain unknown to the actor, and it is therefore difficult if not impossible to account for them by the laws of association and habit. This type of value movement, however, is of the greatest importance, because there are many acts which are of value and are even of vital necessity, but of the value of which we are and sometimes remain in total ignorance. If, therefore, it happens that a movement of value upwards does take place in such wise that we become purposefully conscious of the more ultimate results of our acts, and thus learn to guide our action by these ultimate consequences rather than by the only partially foreseen ends, then we can call this a higher value. Thus the infant possesses an instinct towards searching for food which leads it to some random acts; but if it did not gradually learn to distinguish more and more accurately the real characteristics of and means of obtaining its food, it would be at the mercy of these random acts. Out of all of the ultimate results which follow an act we may, then, distinguish those which have some sort of survival value, and designate them "survival factors" (*Erhaltungsglieder*).

Now it may happen that the survival factor coincides with the chosen end, or not. If it does not there remain open three possibilities: Either the survival factor will occur earlier in the causal chain of the goal-sequence than the chosen end (i.e., it will serve as means to the end), or it will come later in the goal-sequence (i.e., among the ultimate results of the act), or it will lie to one side of the chosen end—as in the case already

¹⁰. Brentano, *The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, pp. 16f.

cited of the person who seeks bodily warmth by means of alcohol, instead of by proper clothing.¹¹ In the first of these cases the good of the individual is almost inevitably served, for in valuing the means to a chosen end the person will unwittingly be valuing that which is a factor in his ultimate survival. In the second case it is highly problematic if the good of the individual will be served at all, because the person's purposeful action ceases with the attainment of his chosen end, and if the factor which affects his survival still lies unforeseen among the possible ultimate consequences of his act it may very well be that an undesirable consequence will result rather than this factor; the same is in general true also for the third case, for similar reasons.

At this point Ehrenfels resorts to the Darwinian natural selection theory to bring it about that there will be a favorable selection of those tendencies in value movement which result either in occasioning a coincidence of the survival factors and the chosen ends, or else bring it to pass that the survival factors occur earlier in the goal-sequence than the foreseen end. A coincidence between the two, with sufficient intelligence to guide behavior by the adoption of proper means to attain the chosen end, would of course be the case most favorable for survival of the self and the species. Therefore that species will tend to survive which sets up as intrinsic values those ends which coincide most closely with survival factors. One may feel justified in questioning whether natural selection would prove adequate to the task of bringing about such a complex result, although it is clear enough that if a species should develop a preference for poison instead of food, natural selection would effect its extermination. Ehrenfels concentrates his attention, however, upon one factor of generally recognized survival value, namely, the intelligence. His argument at this point implies that an increase in intelligence would tend to favor this coincidence of chosen end and survival factor, or perhaps even bring it about, although it is difficult to see how this would happen until intelligence had developed to the point of making the individual concerned familiar with the condi-

¹¹ Ehrenfels, *System*, I, pp. 140f.

tions of survival. Almost universally among primitive people we find that the chosen end falls earlier in the goal-sequence than the survival factor, and therefore, he argues, any increase in intelligence will almost inevitably give rise to a value movement upward. The values which thus result from this movement he calls values of a higher order (*Uebergeordnetenwerte*), and as in the case of the derived values, these values of a higher order can be either individual or successive.

Not only must we deal here with the values which find ultimate expression in the thought of a single individual, but it is also possible to consider certain values from the social viewpoint, inasmuch as they constitute "survival factors" not for the individual as such but for the society or group. Under such circumstances that group or type of society will tend to survive which most effectively sees to it that its survival values are also values for the individual members of the community. This process can be carried on partly by compulsion, influence, example and suggestion, and partly unconsciously by the operation of chance variation and natural selection—the latter being probably the means by which such perfect social co-operation has been achieved in the insect communities of ant and bee.

The question has been raised more recently: Has Ehrenfels here offered the definitive answer to the absolutistic theory of ethical values presented by Brentano? Professor Kraus, in the course of his investigations into the theories of praise, reward, blame, and punishment of Aristotle (which he published for the most part in his work: *Die Lehre von Lob, Lohn, Tadel, und Strafe bei Aristoteles*, 1905) insists that a theory of reward and punishment is not equivalent to a theory of praise and blame; praise and blame are for the general society what reward and punishment are for the individual. One must be careful, he warns, not to confuse theories of praise and blame with the theory of the meritorious and the objectionable. It is true that praise and blame, like reward and punishment, are powerful means which we adopt in order to maximize *what we think* is meritorious, and to minimize what we think

is objectionable. But Brentano's theory had nothing to do with these practical considerations; it was a study of the *Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong* (and from this viewpoint the English title which Hague gave to his translation does more justice to the true content of the book than if he had translated the German title literally as *The Origin of Ethical Knowledge*). Kraus suggests, in fact, that the German title is a misnomer, and proposes as a substitute: *Vom Ursprung unserer Werterkenntnis*.

The question goes much deeper, however, than any debate as to titles; our ethical judgments may be practical judgments, but by definition they are our deepest value judgments. We may be brought to formulate them by a realization of their extrinsic value; but they would lose the very force without which they can have no extrinsic value if we thought of them as possessing nothing more than extrinsic value.

If one define the meritorious as the praiseworthy, and then define the praiseworthy as that which actually is praised, it would seem that we are driven to accept the theory that our ethical ideals are the product of a struggle, and a struggle moreover in which praise and blame are themselves weapons which are snatched up in the course of the conflict. There would seem to be a *petitio* lurking in this argument. If, on the other hand, one agree with Professor Otto that the ethically ideal is, *inter alia*, the desire to grant to others the same privileges we insist upon for ourselves in the realization of our desires, so that the good is to be defined as the greatest possible harmonious sum of goods, then we would appear again to be dangerously close to a *petitio*. If the alternatives constitute a complete dichotomy then we are perhaps driven to a free postulate, and may choose either theory. We must not engage on so weighty a decision without more consideration than is possible within the limits of the present study.

The Conflict of Values

Value movement does not always take place as the result of the quiet and unobserved operation of the laws of associa-

tion, of increasing intellectual capacity, etc. There is sometimes, perhaps always, a certain stress and strain in the process of valuation, which may be designated metaphorically as a struggle between values, in such wise that the value which finally eventuates from the competition of various possible valuations may be designated as the value which survived in this struggle (*der Kampf ums Dasein der Wertungen*). And just as formerly in the case of the struggle at the margin of consciousness between the ideas striving to maintain themselves in consciousness, so here also we have a strictly physiological explanation for this struggle for survival.

The limitation of vital force is that which furnishes the ultimate explanation of the struggle for existence between the various valuations.

Every valuation is an emotional disposition, and the creation of every emotional disposition makes demands upon the powers of adaptation, that is on the "life force." The human being cannot afford to create and maintain an unlimited number of valuations of unrestricted magnitude or intensity.¹²

"Life force" is not in quotation marks in the original but we wish to call attention to it because Ehrenfels has in the immediately preceding pages made it clear that he is not making reference here to any "vitalistic" theories, but solely to the concept of "vital force" in a purely physiological sense admissible both by mechanists and vitalists, materialists and idealists. At any rate, regardless of questions of nomenclature, Ehrenfels insists that no one can continue to make valuations in unlimited quantity, owing to the sheer physiological limitations imposed on us in all sorts of action. As a result there must be some possible valuations which are excluded or "defeated" by the sheer fact of this limitation; and upon this concept of the life force he bases his theory of the struggle obtaining between values and valuations.

The motivation of conduct is to be understood largely in terms of such conflicts of value, for very frequently it happens that an intrinsic value which is not alone sufficiently "attractive"—in the sense defined in Ehrenfels's study of desire—to maintain itself or its idea in consciousness, receives a psychic reinforcement from the fact that it also serves as means to

¹² *Ibid.*, I, p. 149.

some other end and thus constitutes an extrinsic value also. Even though it would not be able to maintain itself in consciousness either as an intrinsic or an extrinsic value, yet in its joint capacity as both at once it survives in the competition, the struggle for survival between values.

Such values Ehrenfels calls "dependent intrinsic values," and when the extrinsic phase of their value ceases to exist, they frequently suffer eclipse. In the case of the individual this sort of thing happens without notice, but in the case of the "successive" dependent intrinsic values which gradually are created in the course of the life of a social group the process is not without its pathetic aspect. Such a "playing out" (*Entfrommung*) of dependent intrinsic values we have in the case of a nation which has grown great by exercise of military skill, and then in defeat is deprived of the power of further employment for its soldiers. In such a people the military virtues retain their intrinsic value, but they are destined to pass away, and in that process there is bound to be some maladjustment and suffering, even though it be for the greater good of the world-community that they should pass. Closely related to this is the doom of intrinsic values which rest in part or wholly upon a system of judgments (e.g., of religious truth) when the underlying truths of the whole system come to be disregarded or impugned.

Having discovered that some intrinsic values are dependent, it is only natural that one should conclude that there are some intrinsic values which are *independent*, in the sense that they do not depend upon any extrinsic aspect or phase of their make-up in order to survive in any imaginable struggle for survival among values. This raises the question as to whether any intrinsic values whatsoever are so universal and founded on such elementary needs that they can be regarded as being safe from the danger of "playing out" or losing their value. One might well presume, it would seem, that "hunger" and "love" certainly would be universally ranked as such eternal intrinsic values. But Ehrenfels points out that we have no proof of this proposition, and indeed even today they are largely held in

check by many of the "values of higher order" of our cultural society, so that it is unsafe to predict what the future may bring forth in this connection. Be this as it may, the fact still remains that as long as psycho-physical organisms such as ours need food to keep alive and must reproduce their kind sexually to keep the species from extinction, one can insist that hunger and—some form of—love (as well as protection from the elements and the sheltering of children, *inter alia*) will always find a place in every goal-sequence, as above defined. It may be that they will not always be recognized as values, but if they lose their place in the goal-sequence of each person, in the conduct of his life and the pursuit of his values, then the death of the individual and the extinction, or suicide, of the race, either or both as the case may be, are inevitable. In this sense one can speak of certain goal-sequences as independent.

Ehrenfels recognizes that he has made free use here of the concept of Darwinian evolution and that it is necessary for him to justify his position in view of certain criticisms directed against his theory. He does not here undertake a complete *apologia* for Darwin, but he does endeavor to buttress the theory in certain places where in its original form it seemed to be too weak to permit further employment. His argument here is of importance for his general theory not in so far as he accomplishes his aim of refuting certain criticisms, but in that it serves as the final basis for the classification of the different types of value movement which he has been studying hitherto.

The older view of natural selection was that all of the forms of animal and plant life which survived did so because they showed a greater economy in the expenditure of "life force" than other forms; biologists had observed, however, that there were exceptions to this rule, such as the appearance occasionally of organs which have no discoverable survival value in the older sense of the term—such as the deer's antlers and the peacock's tail. He pins his whole case to the detailed analysis of the former case, and tries to see how the deer's antlers can

best be explained. They are of positive value in that they serve to consume vital energies which are present for the given species in *superabundance*, and which, if they were not drained off in some harmless manner would upset the delicate balance of vital forces. This theory is based on the introduction of a new factor in the Darwinian struggle for survival. According to the traditional theory the struggle for survival was considered to be so severe that those organisms which survived were thought to do so by the narrowest possible margin, and there was no consideration given to the problem of "surplus vital energy" because it was held that there would be none. If such were the case, then it would be difficult indeed to account for the deer's antlers along the lines of the survival theory, for, Ehrenfels argues, they are as much a hindrance in running through the thickets of the deer's habitat as they are a help in fighting its foes. Furthermore it is only the male who is thus armed, although in the defense of the young the female really has greater need of weapons than the male. And most significantly of all the antlers drop off in winter just at the time when they would be of greatest service owing to the greater ease with which the deer's enemies can track it to its lair. The fact that the antlers are at full growth during the rutting season, and that the males employ them in the rival conflict has been suggested as indicating that they serve as a secondary means of sexual selection, and are thus to be accounted for, but Ehrenfels contends that the males could fight just as well with other weapons such as the front feet.

He does see great significance in the fact that the deer's antlers grow most actively during the time of sexual quiescence, and that their growth is stopped during the rutting season and their shedding comes shortly afterward, for this indicates that they are a means of consuming a surplus of vital energy which happens to fall to the lot of the deer family, and which is consumed in sexual activity during the rutting season. They serve, in short, as a periodic "bloodletting" to absorb this surplus energy in order that it may continue to be accumulated and released in a steady and adequate stream, ready to be turned to these other uses at other seasons. Ehrenfels

adds the suggestion that this process may possibly explain the evolution of other organs which have hitherto constituted puzzles to the biologist, such as the eye, the peacock's tail, and the butterfly's wing pattern. They all constitute cases where, owing to a surplus in the supply of vital energy, nature was free to "follow its fancy."

According to this theory we have first the type of variations which do not represent a surplus of vital energy, but merely the most economical conservation of the barely adequate existing supply, such as the better and better adaptation of an organism to a harsh environment. An example of this would be the evolution of lungs in amphibians, for if the lungs did not develop the animal would perish in its former home owing to overcrowding; the lungs enable some individuals to survive who otherwise would suffer extinction. In addition to such variations we have those which are possible owing to a surplus of vital energy. These fall naturally into three large groups: (1) variations which employ this surplus in order to adapt the organism more perfectly to its environment or even to progress to a higher level of adaptation entirely, as in the case of the development of the human brain; (2) variations which simply avoid a disturbance of the balance of vital forces by drawing off all of the surplus energy, or a large share of it, (periodically) in the production of stereotyped and otherwise perfectly harmless "excrescences" such as the antlers above described; and (3) variations which consume so much of the vital energy that not only is the surplus absorbed, but actual inroads are made on the energy necessary for survival, so that the organism either degenerates or becomes extinct, and generally tends to the latter in any case.

Ehrenfels then turns to the application of this classification of types of variation to the classification of values, and finds that we have by analogy four great classes of value: (1) survival values, which represent the independently intrinsic values (or goal-sequences) we have already studied; (2) adaptive values or

progressive values, which are best typified by the values embodied in a growing and forward-moving culture; (3) stereotyped values such as we find them in the "effete" civilizations of the East, which serve by elaborate ritual and minute perfection of meaningless detail to absorb energy which would otherwise be "surplus energy" and would consequently upset the delicate balance of social forces; and (4) values of degeneracy, the hectic and morbid wastefulness of a moribund culture which realizes (?) that it is nearing its end. *Après nous le déluge.*

Such is the nature of the analogical argument which Ehrenfels draws from the theory of biological evolution in support of his classification of values. There is one objection—of a purely formal nature, presumably subject to correction by a careful rewording of the argument—which must be called to attention. This consists in the fact that he has explained the evolution of the *luxus organe* such as the deer's antlers and the peacock's tail on the assumption of a surplus of vital energy, as we have already seen. After completing this phase of his argument, he attempts to *prove* that there must be this surplus of energy on the basis of the "empirical evidence" of these same *luxus organe*. This would seem to constitute a *circulosus*; and in fact it forces us to say that Ehrenfels is not in a position to offer a proof of his theory, but only to suggest it as a probable explanation. All that we can demand of the argument, then, is that it furnish the basis for the analogical classification which he offers of values.

Biological evolution, while offering the most systematic explanation of value movement, is not the only resource; the other factors, however, are so scattered and diverse that it is difficult to do more than call attention to some of them as, for instance, changes in habitat, in climatic conditions, in food supply, in technological developments in industry (the factor relied upon most extensively by the Marxian analysis of value movement), etc. Adaptability to such changes constitutes one of the most powerful weapons of the human species in the struggle for survival.¹³

¹³. Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," ii, p. 249.

At this point Ehrenfels nearly gives up the hope of achieving a final theory of value movement, owing to the almost indescribable complexity of the problem; all he can hope to do is to pick out certain factors which are of dominant importance. Among these certainly are the development of human intelligence, and, sharply distinct from this, the growth of human knowledge. Owing to the fact that man possesses in the art of writing a means of conserving and transmitting his hard-earned knowledge and experience one may presume that as long as intelligence as such does not diminish there will be a steady—but ever more slow—forward movement of knowledge. The only way in which human culture can come to a standstill is in cases where the succeeding generations make no attempt to add to the fund of knowledge inherited from their fathers, and dissipate their surplus energy in extravagance (as the Chinese, who waste their surplus energy in opium smoking and sexual indulgence).¹⁴ Aside from this, however, humanity must acquire, in order to make the ever-accumulating fund of knowledge its own, an increasing power of abstraction. With this must come an ever greater and greater consciousness of the goal toward which evolution is carrying us, and with this a more and more conscious valuing of this goal—for one cannot strive toward a goal which he does not value. Just as today we look into an ant-hill or bee-hive and on first inspection are led to believe that the members of the community each behave with a consciousness of the end toward which they strive, but upon closer scrutiny we find that they behave as they do under the control of a number of separate but marvelously interrelated instincts, so perhaps some future human being, having acquired a power of abstraction and a fund of knowledge which to us would seem to be god-like, will look back upon our civilization and boasted valuations and find that the “survival factor” in the goal-sequence, by virtue of which our value systems survive, was totally unknown to us, and that we did what we did under the guidance of unconscious instinct and habit, and that our values changed, and shifted under the action of chance variation and the law of the

¹⁴. Ehrenfels, *System*, I, pp. 172f.

survival of the fittest in the struggle between valuations. One must be careful at this point to draw a distinction between the absolute value of such ultimate knowledge—in the terms of Brentano's theory of the absolute value of all knowledge as such—and the purely descriptive character of these propositions as Ehrenfels expresses them, because he does not state that this increasing knowledge necessarily represents an increase in value; it merely points the way which all our value systems seem destined to follow; i.e., toward greater and greater consciousness of their goal and better and better adaptation of means to this end.

At a much later stage of his investigation Ehrenfels returns briefly to this problem of value movement (in connection with the discussion as to whether ethical values are intrinsic or extrinsic), and he calls attention here to the fact that very frequently a system of values loses the force and applicability which it once had. We can divide roughly all values into the three groups of the "coming" values, the "normal" or "regnant" values, and the "outlived" values. He goes on to point out—with special reference to morality, it is true, but in terms which could be generalized very easily for all fields of value—that in all cases where part or all of the value in question is extrinsic the valuation of this extrinsic phase of the value depends somewhat on the stage of knowledge of the community; and in view of the fact that knowledge grows continually, and that further the effect of an increase in knowledge in changing our values is not immediately evident, one can say that a complex system of extrinsic values never can represent the optimum value system for the moment, but always at best represents the optimum system for some previous time. In the case of morality this is particularly distressing and easily gives rise to the pessimism with regard to the legal and moral codes of society which seems so chronic. It means that our legal and ethical systems seem doomed to be forever "outlived" even though they strive to "catch up with" the movement of thought and of values.

Thus we see that the determination of the forces which affect the moral judgment is really one of the most complex questions which the student of human culture can investigate. Small wonder then that so many errors and blunders have been committed in this field—for as Ehrenfels has indicated, the human spirit seems ever yearning for some final haven of values, some world in which we can be sure that that which is of value will always be of value. Hence we fall easy prey to the converse fallacy of accident (hasty generalization) and accept rather inadequate evidence that we have discovered the *summum bonum* or the key to this riddle of the universe. In our concluding chapter we shall see what the Austrian theory has to offer by way of criticism and of suggestion with regard to this ultimate problem of all value theories.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Ultimate Goals

XIV

ULTIMATE GOALS

WHAT does the Second Austrian School offer us by way of ultimate goals? What could any school offer which has been so subjective, so empirical, so relative, so dynamic and evolutionary in its thought as we have seen this school to be? Certainly at first blush one would not be inclined to search among the writings of these men for any system of ultimate goals—taken in the ordinary acceptation of the term. We must keep in mind, however, that here we are in search not of absolute values but of ultimate goals. The former we have already discussed sufficiently to note that the Austrian school offers very little if anything in the way of codes of value (whether ethical or other) which are valid for all, and very much in the way of systems of relationships between value judgments (extrinsic and intrinsic, opposed feelings, the law of omissions, the chief value formulæ, etc.) which are capable of rigorous analysis, symbolic representation, and logical demonstration. But ultimate goals are not absolute values capable of self-evident certainty; for if there are any ultimate goals they may very well as yet lie entirely beyond our ken, or may be apparent only to a chosen few. And it is necessary to discover what are our ultimate goals—if indeed we have any—before one can say whether they follow logically from our accredited systems of value relationships, or have any rigorous and logical relationship *inter se*. We also must distinguish here between an ultimate goal and what we have discussed in the previous chapter as “independent intrinsic values”; i.e., values which must survive in any competition of values, and which must find their place in the goal-sequence of the individual or the race if that individual or that race (tribe, nation) is to survive

in the biological sense. Independent intrinsic values are indirectly reinforced by the fact that the automatic processes of organic evolution eliminate the competing values.

What interests us here is not what the far-sighted investigator can discover as being what ought to be valued, but what are the ultimate goals which are implicit in our actual values. Let us take, by way of illustration, the case of economics. Economic values as we know them today can not be said to be absolute, for we know that they are subject to continual change and flux. Nor is it possible to find any economic values which must be included in the goal-sequences of the "economic man" on pain of being eliminated, other than the perfectly tautological but worldly-wise saying: "Nothing succeeds like success." Even the Biblical injunction that he that does not work shall not eat is now quite successfully evaded. One could admit readily all of this, and still raise the question as to the ultimate goals of the business world. There are as many ultimate goals, perhaps, as there are self-conscious free economic agents; would it be too much to say that the ultimate goal of the economic system as a whole is the most harmonious and greatest possible achievement of all of these goals? If these goals did not conflict, one might not object; but if they did, then we would be thrown back into the problems of justice and ethics. In any event one can certainly say that the actual economic system as we know it today does embody many compromises between such conflicting goals, compromises which have been so universally accepted and are of such long standing and have proved so efficacious in the maximization of values for all concerned that they have long since ceased to be ethical problems and have become morally or legally binding obligations, part of the set of "working rules" so well analyzed by Professor Commons in his *Legal Foundations of Capitalism*. The student of the ultimate goals of economics should begin with these working rules, should try to discover what principles are implicit in them, and should see if these principles have received their adequate formulation or are still in flux. In

so doing he might hope as the result of his investigations to suggest a comprehensive system of such principles as a guide in the slow evolution of economic society.

Is a similar program possible for the student of the ultimate goals of ethics? Meinong points out that here there is a fundamental difference between ethics and all other normative sciences; the other normative sciences consist in devices for securing better and larger results by the use of well established fundamental principles. Thus for economics there exists a set of "working rules" and for mathematics, logic, and similar sciences the same might be said. But for ethics (and one might add, for æsthetics) it is these fundamental rules themselves which are in dispute, and it is the first duty of the ethicist to turn his attention to their derivation and formulation.¹ Meinong felt very modest about his own achievements in this direction in his published works; whether his unpublished *Ethische Bausteine* will yield the corner-stones of the empirical theory of ethics must remain for future investigation.

Ehrenfels progressed a little further toward the solution of this problem. We have already observed that in the thought both of Meinong and of Ehrenfels, ethics was seen to possess extrinsic utility—a utility which would lead the disinterested spectator to prefer ethical dispositions to unethical dispositions in the behavior of the *Ego* toward the *Alter*. But to say this is to raise a still more fundamental question. For when we recognize that anything is an extrinsic good, we immediately turn our minds to the question as to the nature of the intrinsic good for which this extrinsic good functions as the means to the end. In keeping with his general relativistic theory Ehrenfels was at first very chary about trying to find any such intrinsic values in ethics. It is true that at the very beginning of his researches he had said:

A given object can be valued in two different ways, either for itself or as the means to an end. We demand of the *ethical values* that they *esteem* or *detest* their objects *for themselves alone*, that these therefore shall represent intrinsic values or intrinsic disutilities.²

¹. Meinong, *Untersuchungen*, p. 224.

². Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," iii, p. 325.

He adds however that they can also possess extrinsic value, and from this point on turns his attention, as we have seen, almost exclusively to this aspect of the question. There are, however, throughout Ehrenfels's works, three possible bases for a study of the intrinsic values of ethics, two of which come to expression rather early in his study, the third on the other hand coming to attention only very gradually and much later than the others. These are: (1) the "individual ethics" (as contrasted with the social ethics which has occupied us for most of our discussion) as expressed in the phenomena of conscience; (2) the ideal of constitutive progress (as contrasted with the ideal of cultural progress); and (3) the utilitarian canon of "the greatest good for the whole" (although with such modifications from the strict utilitarian theory as we have seen to be necessary in the light of his criticisms). We shall examine each of these in turn very briefly, in order to determine whether or not in the course of his writings on the subject Ehrenfels was ever able to give expression to ultimate goals which in any sense would be valid for the race.

The Goal of Individual Ethics

Individual ethics is, as we have seen, that code of ethics which would be valid for a person even if he were living in utter solitude, and which yet holds for him when living in society. Ehrenfels gives various formulations of it,³ but this much is common to all of his statements, that it is based on that feeling of mystic sublimity and awe which all of us experience when we think of death and of the ineluctible termination of our own existence here. It is true that we can at times evade these thoughts and even if they press on us we may put them off; but such a procedure is merely an attempt to escape by a *cul de sac* and sooner or later we are forced to face these questions and to take a personal attitude toward them. In so far as the possession of what is generally termed a "good conscience" (e.g., the consciousness of having observed all of the moral imperatives of the society in which one lives) increases the inner peace and calm with which one faces these

³. *Ibid.*, iii, pp. 327ff; *System*, II, pp. 60ff; *ibid.*, II, pp. 144ff.

ultimate questions one may say that this good conscience is an end in itself, and therefore the intrinsic good in terms of which one may measure the extrinsic value of the ethical code. Obedience to the ethical code which is motivated in this manner is what Ehrenfels calls the morality of the individual ethical sanctions. It is quite clear that the extent to which this ethical sanction controls human behavior will depend largely upon the metaphysical convictions which one has with regard to the ultimate destiny of the individual being. It is clear also that this ethical sanction is dependent strictly upon the moral theory which one holds, such that a person holding one moral belief would be rendered uneasy in his mind by conduct which in no way disturbs another. Therefore we must seek deeper than this for any ultimate human goals.

The Goal of Constitutive Progress

In turning next to the ideal of *constitutive progress* as basis for the intrinsic values of life we are stepping definitely out of the line of the chronological development of Ehrenfels's thought, for although we find adumbrations of his theory of constitutive progress early in his work, it was not until 1903 that it began to take definite shape in published writings.⁴ Nevertheless it is closely related, in fundamental assumptions, to the concept of individual ethics. The latter ended in a strict relativism of subjective "conscience" and in the admission that the values of individual ethics were based upon metaphysical and religious convictions which were subject to radical change and which are indeed undergoing such change. These convictions have to do for the most part with the ultimate destiny of what we know as human consciousness after death. In constitutive progress Ehrenfels feels that he is able to offer us convictions which would not thus be based on questionable and relative metaphysical speculations and religious dogmas, but which are demonstrable and, he believes, possess a universal appeal. They are ideals which do, it is true,

⁴ See Bibliography.

reach beyond the life of the individual himself, not touching his own future destiny, but touching the destiny of his descendants on this earth.

It was not until his investigations in sexual ethics were converging toward their final statement that Ehrenfels began to feel the force of these ideals of constitutive progress as ultimate goals for human endeavor. Constitutive progress must be contrasted with cultural progress as being that progress based on the biological improvement of the human race. A great deal of his eugenic theory was posited on his own speculations in biological theory, into the merits of which we need hardly go at this point, inasmuch as it was very far from the central problem of value theory. At one point this theory impinges with great force and abruptness on morals; namely, when he insists that the outstanding eugenic problem of our race is the reform of our marriage customs. Under monogamous marriage it happens that many people are denied children who want them and are admirably fitted to have them. Furthermore there is no possibility for that competition between males which Ehrenfels places as almost coördinate in importance with survival of the fittest in the improvement of the species. He lists three forms of natural selection: vital selection (the actual elimination of the unfit), Darwin's sexual selection (choice of mates) which is perfectly consistent with monogamy, and *virile* selection (struggle between males) which is inconsistent with monogamy, and which is based on the relatively greater reproductive capacity of the male over the female. Our cultural ideals have devised a marriage system which by eliminating this third selective factor from the biological evolution of the western civilized world (or at least distorting it) operates to the detriment of our race.

He therefore urges on our consideration the conserving of these "natural" values which serve the biological survival and evolution of the human species or at least of our (white) race of mankind. Thus from the biological viewpoint there are certain "limiting conditions" which set bounds to any "healthy" variation in our social regulating codes; for even

though these limiting conditions change somewhat from time to time, there is always sufficient consistency to them and a sufficient body of permanent requirements governing them so that one can easily determine what, in abstract, is the nature of these "natural values." It is true that the term natural values has been employed in almost every possible connotation, so that Ehrenfels finds it necessary to introduce another term, that of the "right" or "hygienic" in morals, customs and law (in contrast to the false) to cover that subclass under the general class of natural values which conduce to the health or survival of the particular race at the moment and under the given conditions. That which is hygienically right for one time or people may not be necessarily right for another time or people. His suggestions for a polygynous system of marriage falls, therefore, under this class of the "hygienic for us."

That the opposition which Ehrenfels's speculations aroused was so bitter that he was driven into polemical defense of his views and thus came to lose the perspective which a student of value theory must never lose was a perfectly natural consequence of the state of mind of his generation. From this debate it would be extremely difficult to discover wherein lay the truth—and furthermore such an investigation would take us far afield. In this discussion Ehrenfels confuses constantly the "independent intrinsic values" which he hopes to persuade others to accept with the ultimate goals of our existing society. That the constitutive progress of the race, and especially of our own branch of that race, is one of the ultimate goals of our present society is unquestionable; whether the constitutive ideals are in such a precarious situation, owing to the "elimination of virile selection" that we must jeopardize our cultural ideals in the adoption of drastic measures for the conservation of our biological constitution is much more seriously open to doubt. Ehrenfels protests that this problem need not arise, and in support of his contention he suggests several elaborate utopian schemes for accomplishing this harmony between the two sets of ideals. The proper place for the discussion of his suggestions is not, however, the

present study of the general value theory, but a detailed study of the problems of the sexual and marital life of our culture. Such a study should weigh Ehrenfels's argument and proposals on their own merits, should examine in detail all of his biological premises, and should introduce the more recent developments in this field from sources far removed from the Austrian school of value theory.

The Utilitarian Goal

Ehrenfels's theory of the "welfare of the whole" as a possible basis of the intrinsic values of ethics underwent considerable modification in the course of his investigations. We shall take his statement of it as we find it in the *System* as the basis for most of our study of it. His first difficulty with regard to this canon is a matter of definition: Just what are we to understand by the phrase, "the welfare of the whole"? Ever since Bentham brought the utilitarian canon to the center of ethical controversy this has been a debated question. Ehrenfels, however, does not regard himself as in any strict sense a Utilitarian, and he therefore feels free to neglect those formulations of the canon which rely upon its self-evidence or which presuppose a mediation on the part of the judgment between the ethical data and the ethical behavior. He begins, rather, by suggesting the possibility of measuring the greatest good in terms of the greatest happiness.⁵ It is true that in this field we are faced with enormous difficulties when we attempt to measure in exact, quantitative terms such an ambiguous and subjective phenomenon as "happiness," although Ehrenfels insists that this difficulty need not be regarded as fatal to any such investigation. Thus he suggests that it is possible to make some sort of estimate of happiness, even quantitatively, just as it is possible to make a subjective guess as to the height of a mountain or the weight of a stone by simply relying on our "eye" or our kinæsthetic sensations. We must note, however, that this comparison is a little misleading, in that our "eye" has been trained in the judging of heights by long experience with

⁵. Ehrenfels, *System*, II, p. 41.

various landscapes of which we know the principal altitudes, just as our kinæsthetic sense has also been trained by the long handling of known weights. If, however, one were to ask a person familiar with the system of English pounds and ounces to estimate the weight of a certain stone in terms of grams and kilos (presuming that he does not know the value of the gram in terms of pounds) then it is obvious that his "estimate" would be as worthless as is the estimate of most people when asked to estimate how happy they are. At the most they would be able to suggest an estimate very roughly with reference to "how happy they were yesterday" or under certain definite conditions, but any attempt to give objective significance or validity to this estimate would certainly be unjustified.

Ehrenfels's objections to the definition of the greatest good of the whole in terms of happiness are, however, other than this. The chief of these is that even if one were to accept this definition, there would still be a good deal of ambiguity in many cases. There would be no criterion to tell whether N persons, each having a happiness equal to U would constitute a greater total of happiness than MN persons each having U/M happiness. Thus it would be necessary to decide whether a given amount of happiness concentrated in a single person or "spread out" over many people is better. This raises a problem which Bentham attempted to solve in the interest of the more equal diffusion of happiness, on the principle of the diminishing utilities of the means of happiness. But it should be noted that whereas Bentham's argument is very cogent as far as the means of the securing of happiness—i.e., wealth and economic goods—are concerned, it does not apply so strictly to the present case. Let us grant Bentham's principle of diminishing utility; still it remains possible for one man to have twice the happiness of another even though this double amount of happiness necessitates, say, ten times the amount of wealth and luxury. In view of this fact, it is clear that none of the utilitarian or Austrian economic answers to Bentham's problem really offer much toward the solution of Ehrenfels's problem.

Even more difficult for this theory is the objection that the pessimist might convince us that a surplus of happiness over misery is impossible, and that the greatest possible happiness would be achieved by universal suicide. It would also be necessary to decide more or less exactly what is the "pleasure equivalent" of a single person's life, in order that we might know whether the world is happier by his being alive than it would be with the enjoyment of certain other goods which might have been made available had it not been for the existence of this individual. This is of course the problem which we know today under the name of "voluntary parentage" or "birth control" in so far, at least, as present day economic conditions bring it about that such a choice really has significance. If the economic life of society were so ordered that it were possible for every person to produce a fully proportionate share of values in his productive activities, then this problem would lose a good deal of its force. This is however, such a utopian suggestion that at present and for a future as far as we can see this problem will be of importance.

Ehrenfels does not attempt either to reject completely the definition of "greatest good of the whole" in terms of the feeling of happiness, or to decide as between these various interpretations of this definition. He passes almost without comment to the second possibility, which is the definition of the "greatest good of the whole" in terms of desire. Every living person is from some viewpoints a bundle of desires, and it would seem possible to define "the greatest good" in terms of the satisfaction of the greatest possible number of these desires to the greatest extent in each case possible. In so far as two people desire exactly the same thing—say a Republican victory in an election—then this is easily granted, but the difficulty comes in when we have desires which collide with other desires of other people. To illustrate his problem Ehrenfels likens desires to vectors in a problem in mechanics. Just as in the parallelogram of forces we have the resultant of many conflicting forces so also it might be possible to determine the resultant desire of all of the conflicting desires of a community; in so far as the individual desires were all more or less

represented in this resultant then it would represent a harmonization of all these desires, and the greater the degree of this harmony (i.e., the fewer the desires which are absolutely or largely denied) the greater the good of the whole which results. And as a matter of fact, in view of the close relations between feelings of happiness and unhappiness and desires one might even say that the resultant arrived at by this parallelogram of desire-forces would not differ much from the resultant of the calculus of the greatest happiness of the whole; in other words the resultant desire would be more or less the resultant of this feeling of greatest happiness.

Ehrenfels now suggests a third means of defining the greatest good of the whole which at first glance seems to be little more than metaphor, but which is really very closely related to his whole system of thought. This is the definition of greatest good in terms of the "health" of the whole. He points out that even the plants may be described as "sick" and "healthy"; and as for man there are several different ways in which he may be healthy, the two chief ways being in body and in mind; might not then the greatest good be defined as the greatest degree of physiological and psychological health of all? (*Mens sana in corpore sano.*) And as a matter of fact we need not be greatly concerned with trying to discover which of the two we should choose in case of a conflict between them owing to the fact that for the most part the one implies and involves the other. Health, however, as applied to the whole is not the same as when applied to the individual; the health of the whole is not merely the physical well-being of the individual members of the group; it also involves the propagation of the race and the conservation of the species against extinction. Those values which represent a surplus of energy over and above that needed for bare survival may be divided into three classes: values of progress, of stagnation and of decay. Obviously the last of the three in no sense can represent the values of health. But as between the other two there is, from the viewpoint of the health of the individuals and the health of the species, little if any choice; a species can maintain itself in good health by expending all of its surplus energy in the formation of useless

"luxury organs" (such as the antlers of the deer) just as well as by employing this surplus energy in a progressive evolution. Of course in the biological world this is not a matter of choice but of accidental variation, but here as formerly Ehrenfels is employing the biological problems in order to illustrate his theory by analogy.

He concludes now that the attempts to explain "greatest good of the whole" in terms of feelings, of desires, and of "social health" are not necessarily contradictory or conflicting at all. By incorporating in the explanation these two evolutionary concepts of progress and of stagnation or stabilization, we may say that the former represents the satisfaction of the greatest possible number of desires (i.e., it is the dynamic concept), while the latter represents the definition of greatest good of the whole in terms of feeling (i.e., in terms of the static concept). Thus we find that just as there are many possible geometric definitions of the circle, so here we have many possible definitions of the greatest good of the whole which are complementary rather than mutually conflicting. Furthermore we need not concern ourselves very greatly as to whether the one or the other is the correct definition for any given human ethical system. As we have already seen, the values of progress and of stagnation both presuppose that the conditions of bare survival have been complied with already, or in other words these values are merely different ways of employing a *surplus of energy* over and above what is necessary for the bare existence of the individual or the species. Now this surplus in a given case probably would not be very great, and therefore it is relatively a secondary matter how this surplus is employed. In this sense then all ethical systems represent values of survival. It would be a rather hasty assumption, however, to assert that all ethical systems which have at their disposal a surplus of energy necessarily fall under one of the two classes already cited, for we must remember that Ehrenfels has shown that many ethical systems are really dependent intrinsic values, and when they lose the extrinsic aspect of their total value they very soon become "played out" values. Such ethical systems which are in the process of playing

out might be included in this "biological" classification of ethical values by calling them instances of degenerative values.

Thus we see that Ehrenfels is willing to do for the definition of the ultimate goals of society (the utilitarian goals) what we insisted was necessary to do for the definition of the individual values; i.e., define them in terms both of feelings and of desires. He adds the possibility of defining them also in terms of health, in order to discover that this third possibility really breaks up into two sub-possibilities, one of which coincides with the definition in terms of feeling, the other with that in terms of desire. This raises the question as to whether this identity is correct. Can we say that values based on feeling are values based on the frittering away of a surplus of energy in useless luxury? Or that values based on desire are coincident with those based on the expenditure of this surplus energy in such a way as to effect "progress" (whatever that may mean)? Undoubtedly we can say that very frequently what we have called above (Chapter VIII) the intrinsic values (based on feeling) manifest themselves in elaborate and more or less stereotyped systems which involve a great expenditure of surplus energy merely for their maintenance, and which to the outsider seem to have little significance. This aspect of the matter has, perhaps, best been treated in Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class*, although one should also mention in this connection Goblot's *La Barrière et le Niveau*.

We have less to question with regard to the identification of extrinsic values, as we have defined them above (based on desire), with the dynamic values of progress. For desire certainly implies a dynamic situation, and one who actively strives for the realization of his desires believes that he is making progress, else he would not strive. Whether we possess any scale or standard in terms of which we can measure this progress is more seriously open to question. To admit that no such scale is possible is to make that fatal concession to the *de gustibus non disputandum est* which constitutes suicide for any theory of value. To assert that we have such a scale would seem to bespeak an overweening confidence in our value

theory. It is the duty of an empirical value theory to deny that this dilemma is valid, and to try to discover this scale in terms of the actual values we know, and more especially to try to introduce into value speculation the true empirical methodology.

The Search for Ultimate Goals

One thing stands out above all others at this juncture, namely, the search for ultimate goals still goes on, and seems bound to go on from the very nature of the human being. The three possible goals which Ehrenfels has suggested are not so mutually exclusive as might seem at first glance. Certainly nothing can be accepted as an ultimate goal which would leave the sting of remorse or the poison of doubt in the mind of the individual; we may therefore assert that our ultimate goals, whatever they be, must be harmonious with our personal ethics and our metaphysical view of the universe and of our own destiny therein. Whether one can say with equal certainty that room must be made for constitutive progress among our goals or not, one can be sure that such a goal need not conflict with any other and certainly must be included in the goal-sequence of our race and people if we want our race to survive. And Brentano and Ehrenfels are agreed that although the utilitarian-hedonistic theory is not sound, the utilitarian canon of the greatest good to the whole is a demonstrable goal for a human and cultured society.

It is the duty of the ethicist not merely to mark out goals but also to aid in the achievement of these goals; to eliminate misunderstandings, to direct effort, to instruct and to inspire. In so doing he may take advantage of all of the factors which bring about value movement, as we have detailed them in Chapter XIII. Here the question of importance is, how far can we reasonably expect these efforts to carry us? Is it possible to hope that we can eliminate evil dispositions and evil acts from the world?

As Ehrenfels explains in an earlier discussion, nothing would seem so self-evident as the assertion that this world would be

ever so much better if there were more good people and fewer bad people.⁶ But it must never be forgotten that the human being is tied to a world in which his powers are limited and in which he must economize everything he prizes. This does not mean, as Mark Twain might well have put it, that virtue being the most precious thing we possess we must economize it and employ it as seldom as possible(!) It does mean, on the contrary, that if the possession of virtue is a universal value we must consider the implications of any attempt to make it so. Thus one might say analogously that the world would be ever so much better if men had wings. But we have already noted that biological evolution is possible only when a given species possesses a surplus of energy and this surplus actually is "expended" in bringing about the given variation. Now the outstanding development which marks the human species is the cerebrum as it has evolved to its present proportions. If, then, one were to be granted his wish that "men have wings" this would be possible only at the "price" of a reduction of the cerebrum—and the wish loses its attractiveness. Similarly, all forms of benevolence make demands upon our surplus of psychical and even physiological energy, and it may well be that we need all of the surplus energy we possess for further physiological evolution, or even for sheer survival. Thus he concludes that:

Whoever in this way seeks to increase to any extent the moral dispositions with only the existing supply of vital force must reduce proportionately the capacities which are possibly essential for the sound evolution of life; and the result would be perhaps not a blissful race blossoming in physical and psychical beauty which would bring Heaven down to Earth, but an anæmic, hypersensitive society which, from superabundance of sympathy and sense of duty would have lost the naive joy of living and the untrammelled pleasure of existence, and gradually wastes away in pessimism and moral hyperæsthesia.⁷

Certainly this is no very pleasant picture, but it raises directly the question as to the extent to which, then, our ethical values really serve our intrinsic values. In so far as Ehrenfels has carefully defined the ethically good as that which we

⁶ Ehrenfels, "Werttheorie und Ethik," v, pp. 89ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 90. Cf. F. C. S. Schiller's review of this article, *Phil. Rev.*, III, (1894), p. 364.

might wish to have increased *for the greater good* it would seem that he is safe from any such gloomy result; for if our ethical valuations were carrying us over to this extreme world, it is clear that according to his definition they would *ipso facto* cease to be ethical. We may regard this argument as being directed more especially toward those puritanical codes which lose sight entirely of the Aristotelian golden mean.

The problem is, in the last analysis, one of the application of certain means to the achievement of certain desired ends. Let us turn our attention then to this means-end aspect of the matter for a moment. Let us assign whatever ultimate goal we wish to the rôle of the absolute value or intrinsic value of our extrinsic values. Even so it would be necessary to have a whole hierarchy of lesser values to govern the manifold activities of the daily life, for one cannot guide every act by this one abstract principle. This general principle would be at the best a *regulative* principle, to be consulted only in cases of doubt and conflict.⁸ Furthermore if we may accept the utilitarian theory of motivation to the extent of saying that the acts of a man are motivated by a given end in proportion as his own dispositions in this direction are vigorous, and the end itself is both attractive and apparently attainable, then it may well happen that the regulative principle itself constitutes an end which is so remote or abstract as not to be able to motivate actual human behavior in more than a relatively insignificant proportion of cases. Furthermore in many cases it might well be that even were there a conflict between, say, the principle of the good of the whole and some definite canon of the "lesser" morality, say, mother love, the mother would refuse obedience to the abstract good of the whole, as being a demand that she abandon the interest of her own child. But Ehrenfels is clearly unready to condemn this lesser moral canon merely on the grounds that it is lesser; he is at the most willing to grant that the universal benevolence should govern in the majority of cases. Therefore we may conclude this aspect of

⁸ Ehrenfels, *System*, II, pp. 100f.

his argument with the statement that the subjective urges of conscience and the pangs of remorse in no way yield an absolute or universal code of ethics.

Need we, however, feel that the attempt to derive a code of morals is so indissolubly bound up with the discovery of one ultimate goal of all moral acts? Indeed, is the goal as such of so dominant an importance in the moral problem as has generally been believed? In order to answer this question more adequately, Ehrenfels abandons the strictly ethical field for the moment, and turns to the analysis of instances of motivation drawn from other fields. In so doing he very speedily reaches the conclusion that in all behavior the desire for the end as such is not nearly so helpful for the achievement of the end as is the desire for the performance of the sort of activity which ordinarily brings this particular end into being. Thus the billiard player who plays primarily for the score and the winning is not apt, other things being equal, to be so good a billiard player as is he who plays simply for the love of the game, largely because of the freedom from excitement which the latter enjoys at the critical moments of the play. Ehrenfels suggests that thus many rich men neither enjoy wealth nor the pleasures which great wealth alone permits, for that which motivated them in the amassing of their wealth was not the anticipation of these pleasures as such, but the sheer joy of the struggle and the competition. And thus Napoleon, deprived of the chance to rule Europe, insisted on ruling his bed-chamber on St. Helena. It is this factor which would seem to defeat the hope of any rationalistic utilitarianism to explain the ultimate nature of morality, for the self-conscious striving for a desired goal would seem to be one sure way of increasing one's difficulties in achieving it. Either one's desire will blind one to actual hindrances (the wish becoming father to the thought), thus leading to an undue optimism, or fear that this may be the case will lead one into undue pessimism.

This shift in our values from the valuation of the end to the valuation of the means to the end is what Ehrenfels has already denominated a value movement downwards, and if it

were to consist in this only then this might well represent a tendency which would eventuate in still more persistent failure to secure the end than if one continued merely to value the end. The reason for this is that when one merely values the means, then he is apt to lose sight of the end entirely; a bowler who cares nothing for the score or the stake may become utterly careless as to whether he hits any nine-pins or not, so long as he engages in the activity which he enjoys, namely, bowling the ball down the alley. Thus the most favorable conditions for a high score in bowling would be to have neither too high a stake on the score, nor too low a stake, but one sufficient to concentrate the attention on the end yet not so large as to disturb the accuracy of the play. And similarly in the moral field, we must keep the end in mind to that extent necessary to maximize our chances of achieving this end itself. Thus Ehrenfels concludes that:

Not the greatest possible good, not the highest possible development of the whole, are therefore the highest moral intrinsic values, but the *striving* after the former and the latter—and analogously the striving after the objects of the . . . subordinate moral values (such as the welfare of friends, of blood relatives, the striving for the fulfillment of obligations, etc.).⁹

It must be pointed out that this canon of morality—that the greatest good is the striving for the greatest good—threatens to become circular in its reasoning unless one clearly understands that it is not a definition of the ultimate good itself, but a directive *for* human behavior in the securing of any ultimate intrinsic value whatever. Thus it might well be put in the form: So strive as to maximize thy striving for the end thou chooseth. Such a theory would seem to find its apotheosis in the cultural life of America.

Thus we are again brought face to face with the dilemma of that paradox of values which we encountered at the termination of our discussion of the definition of value (Chapter VIII). In dealing with values it was possible for us to simplify matters by abandoning the attempt to define value as such, and by

⁹. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 110f.

defining instead the two fundamental types of value: extrinsic and intrinsic. This makes for precision in so far as we are concerned with the psychology of valuation, for the psychology of the valuation of extrinsic values is essentially different from that of the valuation of intrinsic values. Here, however, this device will not help us, for obviously there can be no such distinction in ultimate goals as there is in values. Ultimate goals are not identical with intrinsic values, for not all intrinsic values are ultimate goals. I can find the taste of some food or the enjoyment of some piece of music to be for me an intrinsic value; I could hardly class it as an ultimate goal. But all ultimate goals are intrinsic values. Nevertheless, as we have seen, if the broadest possible definition of ultimate goals is that they represent the highest possible state of health (physiological and psychological) for the individual and for the society in which he lives, then this state of health implies that the luxuries which are essential for healthy emotional life of the individual do not exact as their toll an expenditure of more than the surplus energy which is available, and that the unsatisfied desires likewise consume no more than surplus energy. Under such circumstances Ehrenfels feels sure that we can steadily achieve the more immediate of our goals if we proceed with such caution as not to be thrown off the track by the very intensity of our efforts.

We can now restate the paradox of values in terms solely of intrinsic ultimate goals, disregarding the extrinsic values. The paradox consists of the fact that it is impossible, in the world of values, to secure what one wants by directly seeking it out. This has long been recognized in popular adage in such sayings as warn against the direct search for pleasure. The New Testament recognizes this paradox when it warns that he that findeth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life shall find it. The text adds the condition that the life shall be lost for the sake of an ultimate goal—for "My sake."

Brentano had realized that the paradox of values might discourage some seekers, so he had laid down a definite rule taken from Aristotle; after warning that it is necessary to

choose extrinsic values which will certainly attain the intrinsic value, he turns to the question of the ends themselves.

Where it is a question as to the choice of ends we would say: Choose an end which reason regards as really attainable. This answer is, however, insufficient; many a thing attainable is rather to be shunned than sought after; choose the best among attainable ends, this alone is the adequate answer.¹⁰

This is essentially in agreement with Ehrenfels's rule that we must set our efforts on a goal which is not so difficult and distant that we are handicapped at the start by fear of missing it; nor must we throw away all chart and compass and drift at the mercy of each passing gust. If this program is sincerely followed there will be hope of greater advance than if one takes as his ultimate goal a dream so radiantly fair that none would dare to criticize him—and yet only a dream, totally unrealizable.

¹⁰. Brentano, *Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, p. 12.

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The author has in preparation a Bibliography of the general theory of value and related subjects which he hopes to publish shortly.

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